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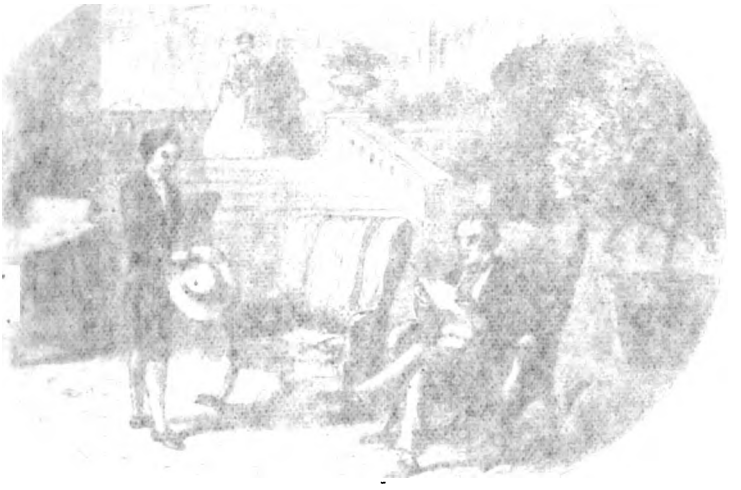

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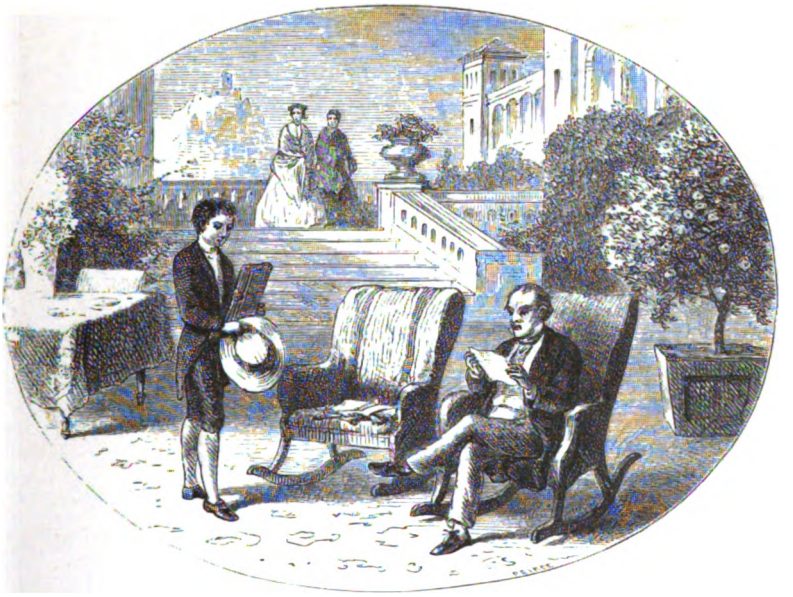

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TRANSLATED BY CHARLES C. SHACKFORD.

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THE COUNTRY-HOUSE ON THE RHINE.

A ROMANCE, BY BERTHOLD AUERBACH.

BOOK I. — CHAPTER I.

THE APPARITION.

"Be patient a few minutes longer! There's a man beckoning to go with us," said the boatman to his passengers, two women and one man. The man was gray-haired, of slender form, rubicund face, and blue eyes of a kindly, but absent-minded and weary expression; a heavy moustache, wholly covering the upper lip, seemed out of keeping with this inoffensive face. He wore a new summer suit of that fashionable material which seems be-dashed and be-sprinkled with white, as if the wearer had purposely rolled himself in a feather bed. He had, moreover, a pretty wallet attached to a leather belt, and embroidered with blue and red beads.

Opposite the man sat a tall and stately woman, with restless eyes and sharp features, that might once have been attractive. She shook her head, vexed at the delay, like one not accustomed to be kept waiting, got up, and sat down again. She wore a pale-yellow silk dress, and the white veil on her gray round hat was wound about the rim like the band around a turban. Again she threw back her head with a quick movement, then looked straight down before her, as if not to show any interest in the stranger, and boring with the point of her large parasol into the side of the boat.

Near the man sat a smiling, fair maiden, in a blue summer suit, and holding in her hand, by the elastic string, a small blue hat ornamented with a bird's wing. Her head was rather large and heavy, and the broad forehead was made yet more massive by a rich abundance of braided hair; a large curl on each side rested upon her shoulder and breast. The girl's countenance was bright and clear as the clear day which shed its beams over the landscape. She put on her hat, and the mother gave it a little touch to adjust it properly. The girl exchanged quickly her coarse leather gauntlets for delicate, glossy ones which she took out of her pocket; and while drawing them on with great dexterity, she looked at the new-comer.

A tall and handsome young man, with a full brown beard, a sinewy frame, a gray shawl over his shoulder, and upon his head a broad-brimmed gray hat with black crape, came down the steep and zigzag path with a vigorous step to the shore. He stepped into the boat, and lifting his hat while bowing in silence, displayed a noble white forehead shaded by dark-brown hair. His countenance spoke courage and firmness, and, at the same time, had an expression that awakened confidence and trust.

The girl cast down her eyes, while her mother once more fastened and unfastened her hat-string, contriving at the same time, with seeming carelessness, to place one long curl in front, and the other upon the shoulder behind, so as to be becoming, and to look easy and natural.

The man in the mottled suit pressed the white head of his cane to his lips. The stranger, seating himself apart from the others, gazed into the stream, whilst the boat was moving rapidly through the water. They landed at an island on which was a large convent, now a boarding-school for girls.

"Oh, how beautiful! and are the lessons learned there?" asked the girl, pointing to a group of lofty trees on the shore, clustered so near together that they seemed to have grown out of one root, and with low seats inside the grove. "Go on!" said the mother with a reproving look to the girl, and immediately taking her husband's arm. The girl went on before, and the stranger followed them.

In the thickets sang the nightingales, the blackbirds, and the finches, as if they would proclaim, "Here is the peace and the rest of Paradise, and no one disturbs us." The dark fir-trees with their sheltering branches, and the long row of light-

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green larches stood motionless by the shore, and bees hummed in the blossoming chestnut-trees. They reached the convent. The building, without any architectural peculiarity, had an extended prospect of the garden, the meadows on the island, the river, and the mountains. It was shut up, and no human being was to be seen. The old gentleman pulled the bell; a portress opened a small window, and asked what was wanted. Admission was demanded, but the portress replied that it could not possibly be granted that evening. "Take in my card, and say to the good mother that I am here with my wife and daughter," said the old gentleman. "Permit me to add also my card," said the stranger. The three looked round, struck by the pleasant tone of his voice. The stranger handed his card, and added, "Please say to the worthy Lady Superior, that I bring a message of greeting from my mother."

The portress closed the window quickly, while the four stood at the entrance. "I took you for a Frenchman," said the old gentleman with a kindly tone to the young man. "I am a German," he replied. "Have you then a relative in the convent, and are you acquainted with the good mother?" "No, I know no one here." The answers of the stranger were so short and direct, that he gave no opportunity to continue the conversation, and the old gentleman appeared to be a man of position and character, who was accustomed to be addressed, and not to make advances. He walked with the two ladies towards a beautiful flower-bed, and placed himself with his companions upon a seat. But the girl was restless, and walking up and down along the edge of the meadow, she gathered the hidden violets. The young man remained standing as if rooted to the spot, staring at the stone steps which led up to the cloister-door, as though he must find out what various destinies had already gone in and out over them.

Meanwhile, the old gentleman said to his wife, "That elegant young man appears to me to be a gambler, who has lost all his means at one of the neighboring baths. Who knows but that he wants to borrow money of the Lady Superior?" She laughed at her husband for being disposed to see now, for the third time during this journey, a criminal or a ruined man in the persons they chanced to meet.

"You may be right," said the old gentleman; "but that's the mischief of these showy establishments, that one supposes everybody he meets has something to do with them. Besides, just as it happened with our daughter—"

"What happened with me?" asked the girl from the meadow. "Why," continued the father, "how often, when walking behind you at the baths, have I heard people say, 'What beautiful false hair!' no one now thinks that there is anything genuine."

The girl laughed merrily to herself, and then adding a violet to the nosegay on her bosom, called out, "And I believe the stranger is a poet." "Why?" asked the mother. "Because a poet must be handsome like him." The old gentleman laughed, and the mother said, "Child, you are manufacturing a poet out of your own imagination; but, silence! let us go, the portress is beckoning to us."

The convent door opened, and the visitors entered. Behind the second grated door stood two nuns in black garments with hempen cords about their waists. The taller nun, an old lady with an extraordinarily large nose, told them that the Lady Superior was sorry not to be able to receive any one; that it was the evening before her birth-day, and she always remained, on that day, alone until sunset; that there was a further difficulty in admitting strangers to-day, as the children—for so she called the pupils—had prepared a spectacle with which to greet the Superior after sun-down; that everything was in disorder to-day, as a stage had been erected in the great dining-hall; that the Superior, however, had ordered that they should be shown over the convent.

The two nuns led the way through the main passage. Their step was hard and noisy, for they wore wooden shoes fastened to the feet by leather straps over the stockings. The smaller and prettier nun, with her delicate features pinched up in the close-fitting cap, had kept herself timidly in the background, allowing the other to do the talking. But now she addressed the girl in the blue muslin dress, speaking in French. The mother gave a nod of satisfaction to the father, as much as to say, "There, now; you see it was worth while to let the child learn something; that was my doing, and you only reluctantly consented." The father could not refrain from informing the nun with the big nose that his daughter, Lina, had returned, only six months before, from the Convent of the "Sacred Heart" at Aix-la-Chapelle. The stranger also spoke a few words in French to the pretty nun. But now, and as often as he addressed her, she drew herself shyly back, apparently not from timidity, but with a nervous involuntary shrinking into herself.

The breakfast-room, school-room, and music-room, and the large dormitories were shown to the strangers, and they

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admired the neatness and good order everywhere seen. Especially in the sleeping-rooms everything was arranged as prettily and neatly, as if not real human beings, much less careless children, inhabited them, but as if everything had been made ready for fairy visitants. In one little bed only was there any disturbance. Lina drew back the curtain, and a child with great brown eyes looked up. The young man had also come to the bedside. "What is the matter with the child?" asked Lina. "Only homesickness." "Only homesickness," said the stranger in a low tone to himself, while the lady asked, "How do you cure homesickness?" "The housekeeper has a sure method; a child complaining of homesickness is put on the sick-list, and must stay in bed; when she is allowed to get up, the homesickness is gone, and she feels at home." "Go away, all of you! go away! I want Manna, I want Manna," moaned the child. "She will come soon," said the nun, soothingly, adding in explanation, "No one but an American girl can pacify the child." "That must be our Manna," said Lina to her mother. The twilight was gathering, and through the galleries, in the golden evening light, strange forms rustled in long green, blue, and red garments, and then vanished within the cells.

The visitors went into the dining-room, at the farther end of which there was the representation of a forest scene with a hermitage; and there lay a doe bound with a red cord. The young creature fixed its great eyes on the strangers, and tugging at its cord, tried to get away.

The French nun said that the children, aided by one of the sisters who had a natural talent that way, had themselves arranged the decorations. Large choirs had been practicing, and one of the pupils, a very remarkable child, had composed the piece which represented a scene from the life of the Superior's patron saint.

The German nun regretted that no stranger could be present. A copy of the song to be introduced in the play was lying upon a chair. The lady, taking it up, read it and handed it over to the young man, who ran through the verses. "It's astonishing that a child should have composed them," said the lady. The young stranger felt obliged to make some reply, and observed in a somewhat careless tone, "Our German language, especially when used in rhyming, is an instrument that can easily be drummed upon, and thrummed upon, by any child."

"I told you so; he is a poet," said the triumphant look of the girl to her parents.

As they were leaving the dining-hall, now turned into a temporary theatre, Lina remarked to the pretty Frenchwoman how sorry she was not to be able to see her young friend, Hermanna Sonnenkamp; she herself was obliged to return that very evening with her parents, as they had been invited to attend, to-morrow afternoon, a reception at the Countess von Wolfsgarten's.

The girl said this with a proud emphasis, as if assured that every one must know what was the full significance of a reception at Count von Wolfsgarten's. The Frenchwoman must have noticed it, for she replied, "Here, on the contrary, we do not know each other by the names applied to us in the world outside; we here know only our convent names."

"May I know yours?" "Certainly; I am called sister Seraphia." The girl seemed now on more intimate terms with the French sister, since she could call her "sister Seraphia;" and she rejoiced at the thought of being able to tell at home, in her own little town, about the nun of high rank, at least a princess, whose acquaintance she had made. They walked back through the long gallery, and as they went down the steps, there came up a snow-white form with great wings on its shoulders, and a glittering diadem on its head, from which long black ringlets streamed down over bosom and neck. Deep, black eyes, with long lashes and thick brows, gleamed out of the pale countenance. "Manna!" cried Lina, and "Manna!" echoed the vaulted ceiling. The winged apparition grasped the hand of the speaker, and leading her aside down the stairs said, "Is it you, dear Lina? Ah, I have only been with a poor child pining with homesickness; to-day I cannot speak a word with any other living soul."

"O, how wonderful you look! how splendid! To the child you must be a real live angel! And how glad they will all be at home, when I tell them."

"Not a word about it. Excuse me to your parents for flitting by them, and—who, who is the young man here with you?"

The stranger seemed aware that they were talking about him, and looked from below up to the wonderful vision. He shaded his eyes with his hand, to take a better look, but he could see none of the features, nothing but the mysterious shape and the two gleaming eyes.

"We don't know who he is; he joined us first in the boat; but," she added, smiling

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at her own suggestion, "you can find out, for he sent a greeting from his mother to the Superior; ask her by and by. Don't you think him handsome?"

"O Lina! how you talk! May the Holy St. Genevieve intercede with the dear God to pardon you for saying that, and me" — covering her face with her hands — "for hearing it. Farewell, Lina, greet every one for me."

As the winged apparition swept along the corridor, she was unable to hear Lina calling out that she would, to-morrow, tell them at the Countess Wolfsgarten's all about her. The vision vanished. They left the convent, and at the door the old gentleman said to the young man, "It is a good thing for girls to be educated in a convent on an island, away from the rest of the world." "Girls at the convent, and boys at the barracks! fine world that!" answered the young man, in a sharp tone.

Without a word in reply, the old gentleman, turning away, drew off a few paces with the ladies as if he wished to have no further intercourse with a stranger of such revolutionary sentiments. The stranger hastened to the boat, and was speedily set across. The stream was like pure, molten gold, and the stranger dipping his fingers into it bathed his forehead and eyes. He sprang lightly ashore, and looking over to the island-convent, saw the man, with wife and daughter, just going down to the boat; he waved a distant farewell with his hat, and with a rapid step went up the hill behind the ruins of the castle, overlooking the convent. He continued sitting there for a long time, gazing fixedly at the convent on the island. He heard songs from maiden voices, saw the long row of windows brightly lighted up, and at last, looking up to the stars, he exclaimed, "O mother!"

What did that mean? Perhaps his mother had said to him, that at some time or other a wonderful experience would come over him. The nightingale in the thicket sang on unceasingly, and the young man listened to the song, but would gladly have silenced it in order that he might hear more plainly the singing of the children in the convent, who with magic power had conjured up a dream of heaven into their actual life, and for one hour become choirs of singing angels. "Alone in the spring night, amidst the Castle-ruins with beating heart! Can it be I?" said the young man to himself.

He descended the hill, and as he reached the inn, met the man with the two women just ready to start for the rail-road station. He would have liked to ask the girl who that wonderful apparition was, but he restrained himself. What would be the use? Better that thou knowest her not; then the charm of the vision is pure and undisturbed. He went into the inn; he sat there and read the bill of fare without knowing what he was reading, and what he should select. He stared at the card until the waiter came and asked for it, in order to give it to another guest. He ordered what happened to meet his eye. "What wine would you like? We have 'Drachenblut' of a choice vintage." "Bring some Drachenblut."

He ate and drank without knowing what; he only knew that he must eat and drink something; absently he took up a newspaper lying upon the table. What are convents? what are ruined castles? what is the apparition of a girl with wings? Here is the world, the real, the stirring, the actual world of to-day. You come into an inn, weary after a wide survey from a mountain top, and involuntarily you lay hold of a newspaper, — why is this? It may be that the eye and the mind, tired out by the manifestations of unmoving nature, become refreshed by viewing what is perpetually changing in the world; you are alone, you need to hear some word spoken by one to many, and the newspaper tells you about the world which has kept on its way while you were dreaming, while you were losing yourself in the boundless prospect, and coming to yourself again.

Yes, it is so now! How it was in other times, when one could live on in undisturbed dreaminess, we can hardly imagine. At all times — whether in the pressure of heavy affliction, when our own life has become a burden, and the world indifferent, or in exalted feeling, when we are transported, as it were, out of all actual existence — the newspaper comes, and demands our attention, and calls to us as if we were to cöoperate everywhere in the various relations of the world.

What has America to do with the young man? and yet he has just read an account of matters there; the choice of a new President of the Republic was exciting all minds in the New World, and the name of a man who was a pattern of uprightness and world-wide views, Abraham Lincoln, seemed to penetrate everywhere, and to bring with it a great crisis in the history of humanity. Deeply interested, he looked up smiling, for he remembered that the Frenchwoman had said that an American girl could alone console the homesick child, and that she had also composed the play for the festival. Here a child plays with sacred stories, whilst all is in commotion in her Fatherland. The thoughts of the young man were again

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in the convent, and with the wonderful apparition.

Just as he was laying down the paper, his eye fell upon an advertisement. He knit his brows, looked around, and read again; then asking permission to keep the paper, he carried it with him to his chamber. "A handsome man," said the guests, after he had gone; "evidently a young widower, who wishes to find distraction from his grief in a Rhine-journey; he wears a weed on his hat."

CHAPTER II.

"UP THE RIVER."

"NAME: Eric Dournay. Title: Doctor of Philosophy, late Army-Captain. Place of departure: name of a small University city. Destination:—— Object of Journey: ——"

Such was the entry made by the young man in the register of the inn early the next morning; and he now first noticed written above his name, "Justice Vogt, Lady, née Landen, and Daughter, from"—a small town on the Upper Rhine. That was then the mottled gentleman of yesterday with the two ladies.

Eric, for so we shall hereafter call him, carrying his small valise, went down to the steamboat-landing. The morning was fresh and bright, life and song everywhere, and only one little cloud, like a slight streak of mist resting half way up the mountain-side. Eric walked with a firm and erect step, taking in full draughts of the fresh morning air. He stood at the landing, and looked into the water, from which a streak of mist rose, and became dissolved in the air. Then he gazed long at the island, where the morning bell was ringing to wake up the children, who had been transformed the previous evening into legendary beings. How would that girl with long, black hair and glittering wings open her bright eyes? As if he must drive away this image, Eric took the paper out of his pocket, and read again the advertisement. On came the puffing steam-boat pressing her bow against the stream.

Eric had not noticed that two of the convent nuns, one of whom was the pretty Frenchwoman, had been also waiting for the approaching boat. He did not see them until after they had got on board. He gave them a salutation, but received no response except a look of surprise. They took their breviary, sat down upon the deck and said their prayers. On seeing them, Eric thought he would ask who the girl was with the wings; but he came to the conclusion not to do so, for no result could come from this occurrence, and he wished to concentrate all his energies upon the project he had in view. There were but few fellow passengers, and the morning hour does not encourage sociability, as if the solitude of sleep has yet an influence over human souls.

Eric stationed himself near the helmsman, who whistled incessantly in a low tone: and lost in thought he looked at the upheaved water and the shore. Pressing together his finely cut lips, he seemed determined silently to take in the full poetic beauty of this river and landscape that has never been adequately portrayed, and often shook his head as he heard two persons here and there wasting in so-called conversation the freshness of the morning and the quiet, inspiring influence of the scenery. We shall often have occasion as we proceed, to impart information about this youth. At present we will premise that Eric, the son of respectable parents, receiving a careful education, entered the military service, and then, voluntarily resigning his commission, devoted himself to study. He had just obtained his doctor's degree, working very hard to hasten this event, for only two months had elapsed since the death of his father. On the evening of the day he had taken his degree, his mother urged him to allow himself a few days' recreation. Stroking his pale, thin face, she said, "You will regain the fresh color of life; life and work are one's duty; that was always what your father said and did."

It was to be determined when Eric returned what plan of life they would adopt. The thought, which she could not keep down, was very painful to the mother, that they could no longer continue in their former mode of life without care and responsibility, but must make provision for the future, a state of things never contemplated by her. And with pain that she sought to repress, but could not wholly conceal, calling to mind a saying of Lessing, she saw her son standing in the market-place and asking for work. Moreover, she hoped that her son would consent finally to receive some position through patronage; at any rate he must again recover his fresh, youthful looks. Had the mother seen him now, she would have been astonished to see how quickly that had taken place; for a brightness shone in his eye, and a color in his countenance more brilliant and glowing than in his best and most tranquil days.

For the sake of giving some special object to his journey, she had commissioned him to carry her greeting to the Superior

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of the convent. He was now on his return, for a simple newspaper advertisement had given an unexpected direction to his journey and his purposes.

Wonderful! thought Eric to himself, placing his hand upon the breast pocket containing the newspaper, wonderful, how the calls are given which send forth here and there the adventurous Ulysses!

Meanwhile he had sufficient youthful elasticity not to neglect, for the sake of the goal, the pleasures to be enjoyed by the way. He watched with an intelligent glance the machinery of the boat, and the life on the river and on the banks. At the second landing the two nuns were to stop, and the pretty Frenchwoman gave him a backward nod, as she descended the side ladder. When in the boat she sat looking down with folded hands; and on landing, she gave no further look behind.

The passengers changed at every landing. At one village came a band of pilgrims, chiefly women with white kerchiefs on their heads; and when they disembarked, a troop of Turners came on board, in their light gray uniform, and immediately struck up a song upon the deck, whilst the pilgrims sang upon the shore. In all the cities and villages they passed bells were ringing on that bright spring day full of blossoms and sweet sounds, and Eric felt all that intoxication which the Rhine-life brings over the spirit,—that exhilaration of every faculty, which comes no one knows whence, as no one can say what gives to the wine of these mountains its flavor and its life. It is the breath of the stream; it is the fragrance of the mountains; it is the virtue of the soil; it is the sunlight that glows in man as in the wine, and excites an ethereal gladness which no one can be free from, and which no one can explain.

Eric was often spoken to, but he held himself aloof from all companionship, wishing in the movement around him to be alone with the delightful landscape. There are words which become poles of thought in the meditation of the lonely. Eric heard one fellow traveller say to another,

"I prefer to go up the river, for one can look at everything longer and more closely, and it is a triumph of the human mind that we can make headway against the current."

Against the current! That was the word which that day stuck fast to Eric out of the thousand things he thought of and looked upon. Against the stream! That was also his life-course. He had left the trodden highway, and with bold self-determination he had marked out a path of his own. It is well, for one there learns more perfectly the world about him, and, above all, learns his own strength.

"Against the current!" said he, smiling to himself. "Let us see what will come of it." It was high noon when he disembarked at a little mediæval city.

A young man standing on the shore looked sharply at him, exclaiming, "Dournay!" "Herr von Pranken!" answered Eric. They grasped each other's hands.

CHAPTER III.

DRINKING NEW WINE.

"Before people have fairly done shaking hands, they say, 'Let us drink.' It must be the river there that makes you long so to quench your thirst."

So spoke Eric to the tall, fair youth of his own age, sitting opposite, who had placed his nicely gloved hand upon a brown spaniel whose head lay in his lap. The dog frequently looked up to Eric, whose deep, musical voice perhaps produced an impression upon the creature.

"Here is the list of wines. What year and what vintage do you prefer? Shall we take new wine, still lively and fermenting?" "Yes, new wine, and from the mountain here upon which the sun lies so cheerily, and where the cuckoo calls from the wood;—wine native to the soil, and blood-relation of this beautiful region."

Pranken in sharp, military accent gave the order to the waiter,—"A bottle of Auslése." The wine came, and was poured out golden into the sparkling glasses; the two men touched glasses and drank. They sat among the vines by the shore, where the refreshing landscape stretched itself out over green islands in the river, over gleaming habitations, over vineyards and mountains.

The boats by the shore were still, for the swell made by the steamboat had subsided; here and there the distant rumbling of a railway train was heard; on the smooth stream, in which the white clouds of heaven mirrored themselves, beams of the noonday sun sparkled, and in the foliage of the blossoming elder the nightingale sang.

"This is life!" said Eric, extending his arms. "After a day of loneliness amidst the confused whirl of thoughts and of people, to meet thus unexpectedly an old acquaintance is indeed like home; and let me tell you, moreover, that I look upon this meeting as a good omen."

Otto von Pranken nodded acquiescingly. In the first surprise, he had, perhaps, given Eric a warmer welcome than their ac-

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quaintance warranted; but now that Eric made no assumption of intimacy he nodded, well pleased. Eric has the tact to know his place; it's well. Pranken immediately drew off his glove, and reaching out his hand to Eric, asked, "Are you taking a pleasure-tour?"

"No, I am not in the situation, nor would this be the fitting time to do so. You probably do not know that my father died two months ago." "Indeed, indeed! and I shall be forever grateful to our good Professor; the little that I learned at the military school — and it is little enough — I owe altogether to him. Ah! what patience and what unremitting zeal your good father had! Let us pledge his memory." Their glasses clinked. "When I am dead," said Eric, and his voice had a tone of deep emotion, "I should like that my son should thus with a companion pledge my memory in the bright noonday."

"Ah! to die!" Pranken wished to turn the subject. "If I must die, that's enough, without knowing what is said of me afterwards. It is in a high degree offensive to me, that they have placed their burying ground in the midst of the vineyard yonder."

Eric made no reply, looking with fixed gaze before him, and listening to the cuckoo's voice calling at that moment from the churchyard. "Are you an agriculturist?" he asked, as if summoning together his scattered thoughts. "A sort of one; I have taken off, I don't know for how long it will be, my lieutenant's uniform, and mounted the high jack-boots; but I am bored by the one as much as by the other." He took his nail-cleaner out of his pocket, and worked away industriously at his nails; then with his pocket-brush he smoothed down again his carefully parted but thin hair, occasionally looking up to his companion opposite.

The two, sitting there for a little while without speaking, sharply inspected each other. Two awkward people, who are placed in a position of helpless antagonism, become mutually embarrassed; two clever people, who know each other's cleverness, are like two fencers, who, familiar with each other's ward and pass, will not risk a stroke or thrust. Pranken bent over his glass, inhaled the bouquet of the wine, and said, at length, half smiling, "Perhaps you will now abandon your late Communistic views."

"Communistic! I had no idea that you, like so many others, cover up everything unpleasant with that convenient formula of excommunication, 'Communism.' I should like to be a Communist. I mean that I should like to see in Communism a form of organization adapted to the wants of society, which it is not, and never can be. We must take some other method than this, to get rid of the existing barbarism which compels our fellow human beings to be without the most common necessities of life. It is a bitter drop in my glass, that, while I can here at leisure drink this mountain-wine, yonder are poor hard-driven laborers who can never taste of it."

"To-day is a holiday, and no one labors then," said Pranken, with a laugh. Already, in this first meeting, the contrast of these two young men was plainly to be seen. Eric also laughed at this unexpected turn from his comrade; but he was mature enough not to make a personal matter out of a difference of theory. He therefore came back to neutral ground, and the conversation flowed on quietly in recollections of the past, and thoughts of the future.

In their carriage and gait, the military training of the two young men was plainly to be seen; but in Eric the stiffness was tempered by a sort of artistic grace. Pranken was elegant, Eric noble and refined; every tone and movement of Pranken bespoke attention; but his demeanor had that cool insolence, or — if that is too harsh a word — impertinence, which regards every one outside of one's circle as non-existent, or at least as having no right to exist.

Eric had an equally good figure, but he was more easy and dignified. Eric's voice was a fine, deep baritone, while Pranken's was a tenor. Their different characters could be seen also in their way of speaking. Eric pronounced every word and letter distinctly; Pranken, on the other hand, spoke with a lazy drawl, as if the vowels and consonants were too much for him, and as if he must avoid all straining of the organs of speech; the words dropped, as it were, out of his lips, and yet he liked to talk, and made excellent points. Pranken's remarks were forcible, and came out in jets, like the short canter peculiar to the Royal body-guard. When talking upon the most ordinary occurrence, his manner was somewhat rattling and noisy, like one handling his shoulder-belt, and joining or leaving a convivial company. Eric had thought more than he had talked. A secluded student in the almost cloister-like retirement of home, this bearing was wholly novel and strange to him.

"Herr Baron," said the waiter, as he brought in a bottle of native, sparkling wine, "your coachman wishes to know if he shall unharness the horses."

"No," he replied; and while he was turning the bottle in the wine-cooler he

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added to Eric: "I dislike to interrupt the brief joy of this meeting with you. Ah! you have no idea what a terrible bore this extolled poetry of rural life is!" Pouring out a glass from the uncorked bottle, he said laughing, "Compost, and again compost, is the word. The compost-heap is an Olympus, and the God enthroned upon it is called Jupiter Ammonia." Pranken laughed aloud at his own witty outburst, then drank off his glass, and complacently twirled with both hands the ends of his moustache.

Eric led the conversation back to the beauty of the Rhine-life, but Pranken interrupted by saying, "If now somebody would only take off the paint from this lying Lorelei, with her song about the beauty of life on the Rhine! So the poets always speak of the dewy morning, and we had to-day a blast from the mountains, as if the angels in heaven had spilt all their milk into the fire."

Eric could not help laughing; sipping at his glass, he said, "But the joy of the wine!" "O, yes," replied Pranken, "the old topers drink as a matter of business, but without any poetry. They sit together by the hour, always the same set, and the same half-dozen anecdôtes on hand; or they interchange a superannuated jest, and then go home with red face, and staggering feet, bellowing forth a song; and that they call Rhine joyousness! The one really merry thing in this whole Rhine-delusion is the landlord's garland. "What's that?" "When the respectable godfather tailor or shoemaker has laid in a cask of choice vintage, more than he can or wishes to drink, he hangs upon his house a green garland; and the old German family room, with its hospitable Dutch stove covered with green branches, and its gray cat under the bench, is turned into a bar-room. Every one is on hand from Smith street, Hare street, Church street, Salt street, and Capuchin street. They drink the health of their own wine; this is the only mistress."

"Let us, too, rejoice in our wine," said Eric. "See how the sun still glows in the noble juice which it has so joyfully smiled upon, and so diligently ripened. I drink to thee, O Sun, past and present." With a rapidity that seemed foreign from his ordinarily quiet mood, he emptied the glass.

"I have always thought," replied Pranken, "that you were a poet. Ah, I envy you; I should like to have the ability to write a satirical poem, so peppered that the whole world would burn its tongue with it." Eric smiled, saying that he had himself once thought that his vocation was to be a poet; but that he had perceived his mistake, and was now resolved to devote himself to some practical calling. "Yes," he said, taking the newspaper out of his pocket, "you can perhaps render me a service that will determine my whole life." "Gladly, if it is not against—"

"Don't be alarmed, for it has nothing to do with theories of right, or political matters at all. You can perhaps help me to an introduction."

"In love then? The handsome Eric Dournay, the Adonis of the garrison, wants some one to do his wooing?"

"Nothing of that kind. I only want a situation as private tutor. Look at this advertisement: 'I desire for my son, fifteen years of age, a tutor of scientific education and high-breeding, who will undertake to give him such training as shall fit him for a high station. Salary to be fixed by mutual agreement. A pension for life after the conclusion of the engagement. Address and references to be left at the railroad station at ——, on the Rhine.'"

"I know about this advertisement, and even had a hand in writing it. I must confess that we hit upon something rather unusual in the choice of the expression 'high-breeding.'"

"Is a man of rank to be understood?"

"Certainly. I have no need of defending myself against the charge of what the newspaper hacks call *feudalism*. In this case the point insisted on is, that a tutor in a middle-class family, and especially for a self-willed boy, must be a man of unimpeachable position."

"Certainly, that is all right and proper. Perhaps, although I'm not a Baron, I have an unimpeachable position. I received the title of doctor a few days ago."

Pranken gave him a condescending nod of congratulation, then added quickly,—"And do you leave entirely out of sight that you quit the army with the rank of Captain? I should lay special stress on the military training. But no, you are not fit for a bear-trainer! The boy is as untameable and crafty as an American redskin, and he knows just where to lay hold upon the scalp-lock in every character, as he has already proved on half a dozen tutors." "That would only give an additional charm to the attempt." "And do you know that Massa Sonnenkamp is a millionaire, and the heir knows it?"

"That doesn't alarm me, but rather tempts me on." "Well; I will take you myself to the mysterious man. I have the good luck to stand high in his favor. But no. Still better, you shall go with me first to

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my brother-in-law's estate. You must remember my sister Bella." "Perfectly, and I accept your hospitality. But I would rather you should announce my visit to Herr Sonnenkamp — it seems to me I have heard that name before, but no matter — and let me go to him alone." Pranken threw a questioning glance upon Eric, who continued: "I know how to appreciate your ready friendliness; but a stranger can never quite do himself justice in presence of a third person."

Pranken smiled at Eric's quickness, feeling a sort of pride in having so cultivated a man under his patronage. He took out his pocket-book, and sat for a while with his silver pencil-case pressed against his lips; the doubt arose whether he were doing wisely to recommend Eric to the position; would it not be better to put him off, and bring forward a man who would be quite under his own influence? but as Eric would make the application for himself, and would, most probably, receive the appointment, it would be better to establish a claim to his gratitude. And in the midst of his hesitation a certain kindly feeling made itself felt; it was pleasant to be able to be a benefactor, and he was for a moment happy in the thought.

He wrote directly on a card to Herr Sonnenkamp, begging him to make no engagement, as a highly educated gentleman, formerly an artillery officer, was about to apply in person for the situation. He carefully avoided speaking as a personal friend of the applicant, as he wished to take no decided step without his sister's approval.

The card was sent off immediately, and Pranken played for some minutes with the india-rubber strap of his pocket-book, before putting it back into his pocket.

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CHAPTER IV.

COMRADES WITHOUT COMRADESHIP.

SEATED in an open carriage, the two young men were soon winding along a road which led up the mountain. The air was full of dewy freshness, and high above the vineyards the nightingales in the leafy woods poured forth a constant flood of melody. The two men sat silent. Each knew that the other had come within the circle of his destiny, but could not anticipate what would be the consequence.

Eric took off his hat, and as Pranken looked at his handsome face with its commanding, self-reliant expression, it seemed to him that he had never really seen it before; a thrill of alarm passed through him, as he began to realize that he was forming ties whose results could not be foreseen. His face now darkened with anger and scorn, now brightened with benevolence and good-humored smiles; he murmured to himself some unintelligible words, and burst forth at intervals into an inexplicable fit of laughter.

"It is truly astonishing, most astonishing!" he said to himself. "I could hardly have believed it of you, my good Otto, that you could be so generous and self-forgetful, so wholly and completely a friend. People have always told you, and you have had the conceit yourself, that through all your whims you were better than you would own to yourself. Shame on you, that you would not recognize your innocence and virtue! Here you are showing yourself a friend, a brother, a most noble minister of destiny to another, who is a bit of humanity, nothing but pure humanity, in a full beard. All his thoughts are elevated and manly, but a good salary pleases even his noble manliness."

Pranken laid his head back on the cushions of the carriage, and looked smiling up to the sky. He resolved to take good care that this specimen of noble manhood, who was sitting by him in the carriage, should not thwart his plans, and that what he could not bring about himself, his sister Bella should accomplish. Pranken's whole bearing was forced and unnatural. His uniform, worn ever since childhood, had given him not only a feeling of exclusiveness, but also a definite, undisputed, and exceptional position, which separated him from the ordinary mass of men. Among his fellow-soldiers he was lively, and high-spirited; not specially remarkable for anything, but a good officer, knowing how to take care of and to drill his horses and his men. Now that he had laid aside his uniform, he felt in citizen's dress as if he were falling to pieces; but he held himself all the more proudly erect, in order to show by every movement that he did not belong to the common herd. In the regiment there were always strict rules to be followed; now he was under the command of duty and wearisome free-will. Left to himself, he became painfully aware that he was nothing without his comrades. Life appeared bare and dreary, and he had worked himself into a bitter and satirical mood, which gave him in his own eyes, a certain superiority to that blank, monotonous existence, without parade, or play, or ballet. He looked with a sort of envy at Eric, who, poorer and without advantages of social position, gazed around him so serenely and composedly, feasting on the beauty of the landscape. Eric was certainly the better off. Having become a soldier at a more mature age, he had never lost his own individuality in the '*esprit de corps*' of army life; and now that he was a civilian again, his whole appearance changed, and his nature developed itself under a new and interesting aspect.

"I envy you," said Pranken, after they had driven for sometime in silence.

"*You* envy *me?*"

"Yes! at first it vexed me and roused my pity, that a man like you should enter the service of a private individual, and in such a position! But perhaps it is fortunate for a man to be obliged to determine on some career in order to make a living."

"Just for that reason," replied Eric, "will the task of educating the young millionaire be a hard one. Two things only excite the powers of men to activity: an idea, and worldly gain."

"I don't quite understand you."

"Let me make my meaning clearer. He who uses his power for the sake of an idea enters the region of genius, however small and inconspicuous may be the sphere of his activity. He who works for the sake of profit, to supply the necessities, or the luxuries of life, is nothing but a common laborer. The common need is the compelling power which plants the vine on the steep mountain side, clears the forest, steers the ship, and drives the plough. Where this common need unites itself with the ideal, and this may be in every sphere of life, *there* is noble human activity. A nobleman, who busies himself in the world, has the good fortune to be the inheritor of an idea, — the idea of honor."

Pranken nodded approvingly, but with a slightly scornful expression, as much as to say, "This man to have the audacity to seek justification for the nobility! Nobility

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and faith need not be proved; they are facts of history not to be questioned!"

Again they were silent, and each asked himself what was to come of this unexpected blending of their paths in life. As fellow-soldiers they had been only remotely connected; it might be very different for the future.

The valleys already lay in shadow, though the sun shone brightly on the mountain-tops. They drove through a village where all was in joyous and tumultuous movement, — in the streets, maidens walking arm in arm; young men standing singly or in groups, exchanging merry greetings and jokes and laughing jests; the old people sitting at the doors; the fountain splashing, and along the high-road by the river, gay voices singing together.

"O how full of refreshment is our German life!" cried Eric; "the active, industrious people enjoy themselves in the evening, which brings coolness and shade to the treeless vineyards."

They continued their journey in silence, when suddenly Pranken started convulsively, for there came before him, as if in a dream, a vision of himself, pistol in hand, confronting in a duel the man now seated by his side. Whence came the vision? He could not tell. And yet, was it meant to be a prophetic warning?

He forced himself to talk. A prominent trait of his character, which belonged to him by nature and education was a social disposition, a desire to please all with whom he came in contact. To drive away the vision, and in obedience to this social impulse, he began to tell Eric where he had been. By the advice of his brother-in-law, Count Clodwig von Wolfsgarten, he had just paid a visit to a much respected landed proprietor in the neighborhood, in order to enter upon a course of instruction, if the arrangement should prove mutually agreeable.

The land-holder Weidmann, — who was often called the March-minister, because as a pioneer to help stem the revolutionary current in 1848 he was made minister for three days, — was considered, in all the surrounding region, as an authority upon agricultural as well as political matters.

Pranken talked on, and the more he talked the more he enjoyed his own witty sallies; and the more he indulged in them, the more pungent they became. He began: "I should like to know how this man will strike you; he has, like" — here he hesitated a little, but quickly added — "like all great reformers, a vast train of fine dogmas, enough to supply a whole Capuchin monastery."

Eric laughed, and Pranken, laughing also, continued: "Ah! the world is made up of nothing but humbug! The much-talked-of poetry of a landed proprietor's life is nothing but a constant desire for lucre, tricked out with paint from the glow of the morning and evening sky. This Herr Weidmann and his sons think of nothing but the everlasting dollar. He has six sons, five of whom I know, and all look impertinently well, with pretentiously white, faultless teeth, and full beards. These mountains, which travellers admire, are compelled to yield them wine from the surface, and slate, manganese, ore, and chemicals from the mines beneath. They have five different factories; one son is a miner, another a machinist, a third a chemist, and so they work into each others' hands and for their common interest. I have been told that they extract forty different substances from beechwood, and then send the exhausted residuum as charcoal to the Paris restaurants. Isn't that a pretty love of nature? Then, as to Father Wiedmann, — you enjoy the song of the nightingales, I know. Well, Father Weidmann obtained from the government an edict of protection for them, because they eat insects and are very useful to the fields and woods. Father Weidmann lives in a restored castle, but if a minstrel came there to-day he would get no hearing, unless he sang the noble love by which Nitrogen and Hydrogen are bound to Ammonia. I am almost crazed with super-phosphates and alkalies. Do you think, it is a destiny worth striving after, to be able to increase the food of mankind by a few sacks of potatoes?"

Before Eric could answer, Pranken added: "Ah, there is just nothing that one would like to turn to. The army is the one profession."

As they were ascending a steep hill overlooking the river with its islands, Pranken, pointing up the stream to a white house upon the bank, said, "Yonder is the Sonnenkamp villa, which bears the name of Eden. That great glass dome on which the evening sun is shining is the palm-house. Herr Sonnenkamp is an enthusiastic gardener; his conservatories and hot-houses excel those of princes."

Eric, standing upright in the carriage, looked back upon the landscape, and the house where was to be, probably, the turning-point of his life. As he sat down Pranken offered him a cigar. Eric declined, for he had given up smoking.

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"He who does not smoke will not do for Herr Sonnenkamp;" and he emphasized the word Herr. "Next to his plants, he prides himself upon his great variety of genuine cigars; and he was specially grateful to me, when I once said to him that he possessed a seraglio of cigars. I don't know how he who refuses a cigar can get along with him."

"I can smoke, but I am no slave to the habit," replied Eric, taking the cigar.

"You seem to me not only a Doctor of Philosophy," said Pranken, "but also a real philosopher."

The two travellers drove on in silence. Eric looked down, his mind occupied with many and various thoughts.

O wonderful world! Invincible potencies hover in the air; a human soul is journeying there and does not imagine that another is pressing towards him, and that they both have one destiny. This is the greatness of the human spirit, that there is a preparation for taking up into itself, as if they had one life, some person whose name is not even known, whose countenance has not been seen, and of whose existence there has been no anticipation. He who has not lived for himself alone, he who has dreamed, thought, labored, striven for the common good, he is ready, each hour, to enter into the universal life, and utters the creative word, Be soul of my soul, and speaks the word of salvation, "Thou art thy brother's keeper."

CHAPTER V.

THE OLD NOBLEMAN AND HIS BEAUTIFUL WIFE.

"To Wolfsgarten," was the direction upon the guide-board at the edge of the well-kept forest where they were now driving, on the grounds and territory of the nobleman. Every stranger who asks the way, and makes inquiry concerning the large, plain mansion with steep gables beyond, receives the reply that two happy people live there, who have every blessing except that of children.

There are those who give satisfaction to the soul. Where two sit and talk about them, each feels gratified in being able to perceive and exhibit the pure and beautiful, and is grateful to the other for each new insight; but, strangely enough, people soon tire of talking about the purely beautiful. On the other hand, there are those who furnish an inexhaustible supply of material for conversation which dwells chiefly upon the unlovely features, whilst the attractive are mingled in and brought to the surface with great effort; at the close the speaker feels obliged to add, "But I am no hypocrite when I meet this person in a friendly way, for while there is much to condemn, there is also a great deal that is good." Clodwig was a character of the former, and his wife Bella, born Baroness von Pranken, of the latter sort.

Clodwig was a nobleman in the best sense of the word. He was not one of your affable people, on the same terms with every one. He had a gentlemanly reserve and repose. The independent proprietor, the manufacturer as well as the priest, the day-laborer, the official, and the city-merchant, each believed that he was particularly esteemed and beloved; and all considered him an ornament of the landscape, like some great tree upon the mountain-top, whose shade and whose majestic height were a joy, and a shelter from every storm.

The counsel and help of Clodwig von Wolfsgarten could be counted upon confidently in all exigencies. He had been abroad for a long period, and only since his second marriage, five years since, had he resided at his country-seat. Bella von Wolfsgarten was much more admired than beloved. She was beautiful, many said too beautiful for the old gentleman. She was more talkative than her husband; and when she drove out in a pony-carriage drawn by a span of dappled greys through the country and villages, herself holding the reins, while her husband sat by her side and the footman upon the back seat, everybody bowed and stared. Many old people, who always find some special reason for any new fashion, were inclined to see in this fact of Bella's holding the reins a proof that she had the rule. But this was not so, by any means. She was humble and entirely submissive to her husband. It was often displeasing to him that she so excessively praised, even in his presence, his goodness, his even disposition, and his noble views of life and the world.

Eric had only a dim recollection of the commotion excited in the capital by Bella's marriage, for it happened about the time that he resigned his commission. He had frequently seen Bella, but never the count. The count had been for many years ambassador from the small principality to the papal court, and there Eric's father had become acquainted with him.

Clodwig was known in the scientific world through a small archæological treatise with very expensive designs; for next to music, which he pursued with ardor, he was devoted to the science of antiquity with all that earnest fidelity which was a characteristic of his whole being. It was said in

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his praise, that there was no science and no art to which he did not give his fostering care. Returning from Rome to his native land, childless and a widower, he became an esteemed member of the assembly of the nobility favoring what is called moderate progress; and during the session, he associated much with the old Herr von Pranken, who was also a member. He soon became interested in Bella von Pranken, a woman of imposing manners, and a brilliant performer upon the piano. Bella was now, if one may be so ungallant as to say so, somewhat passée; but in her bloom she had been the beauty of that court circle, where a younger generation now flourished, to which she did not belong.

Bella had travelled over a good part of the world. In the company of two Englishwomen she had visited Italy, Greece, and Egypt. She had hired an experienced courier, who relieved her from all care. On her return to the court where her father was grand-equerry, she mingled in society with that indifferent air which passes itself off as a higher nature brought into contact with the common-places of daily life. She conversed much with Clodwig von Wolfsgarten, who supposed that the insignificant trifles of social life were considered by her as unworthy of notice, and she gained the credit with him of possessing a refined nature occupied only with higher interests. She constantly and actively participated in Clodwig's fondness for archæological pursuits. It was a matter of course that they should find themselves in each other's society, and if the one or the other was not present, Bella or Clodwig was asked if the absent one was sick, or had an engagement. Bella had no porcelain figures and nick-nacks of that kind upon her table, but only choice copies from the antique; and she wore a large amber chain taken from the tomb of some noble Roman lady. She possessed a large photographic album, containing views of her journey, and was happy to look over them again and again with Clodwig, and to receive instruction from him. She also played frequently for him, although no longer exhibiting her musical talent in society.

The entire circle for once did something novel: they carried from Bella to Clodwig, and from him to Bella, the enthusiastic speeches of the one about the other; and even personages of the highest rank took part in furthering their intimacy. This became necessary from the timidity they both experienced, when they became conscious of the possibility of a different relation between them. Meanwhile success crowned the attempt, and the betrothal was celebrated in the most select circle of the court.

Mischievous tongues now repeated — for it was but fair that there should be some compensation for the previous excessive good-nature — that two interesting points of discussion had arisen. Bella, they said, had made it a condition of the betrothal, that he should never speak of his deceased wife, and the old Pranken had asked of the physician how long the count might be expected to live. He must have smiled in a peculiar way when the physician assured him that such old gentlemen, who live so regularly, quietly, and without passion, might count upon an indefinite number of years.

In the meanwhile, the conduct of Bella gave the lie to the malicious report that she hoped soon to be a rich young widow. Clodwig had had an attack of vertigo shortly before the wedding; and always after that Bella contrived that he should be, without his knowledge, attended by a servant. She devoted herself with the most affectionate care to the old gentleman, who now seemed to enjoy a new life, and to gain fresh vigor on returning to his paternal estate. At the baths, where they went every summer, Clodwig and Bella were highly esteemed personages. She was admired not only for her beauty, but also for her stainless fidelity, and for her solicitous attention to her aged husband.

CHAPTER VI.

THE RECEPTION DAY.

It was yet bright daylight here upon the mountain-height, when they approached the Wolfsgarten mansion. As they were making the last ascent through the park, a beautiful girl in a figured blue summer-suit stood in the path between the green trees. Getting sight of the carriage, she quickly turned back again. Two light-blue ribbons, tied behind, according to the fashion, floated in the evening wind. Her step was firm and yet graceful.

"Ah," said Pranken, "to-day we have hit upon my sister's collation-day. That pretty girl who turned about so quickly is the daughter of the Justice, freshly baked out of the oven of the convent of the 'Sacred Heart' at Aix. You will find her a genuine child of the Rhine, and my sister has given her the appropriate name Musselina; there is in her something of perpetual summer. Through this warm-hearted child we are now already announced to the company."

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While he was arranging his hair with his pocket-comb, he continued, —

"The family is very respectable and highly esteemed; the little one is too good to be trifled with; one must have an inferior kind to smoke in the open air."

Pranken suddenly became aware whom he was talking to, and immediately added, — "So would our comrade, Don John Nipper, who was everlastingly betting, express himself. Do you know that the wild fellow has now an affection of the spine, and is wheeled about at Wiesbaden in a chair?"

Pranken's whole manner changed; and springing with joyful elasticity out of the carriage, he reached out his hand to Eric, saying, "Welcome to Wolfsgarten!" Many carriages were standing in the court-yard, and in the garden they found the ladies, who with fans and parasols sat upon handsome chairs around a bed of luxuriantly-growing forget-me-nots, in the centre of which was a red rhododendron in full bloom.

"We are no peace-breakers; don't let us disturb you, good ladies," cried out Pranken from a distance, in a jesting tone. Bella greeted her brother, and then Eric, whom she recognised at once. The wife of the Justice and Fraulein Lina were very happy to renew the acquaintance of yesterday; then were introduced the district physician's wife and sister, the head-forester's wife and her mother, the apothecary's wife, the burgomaster's wife, the school-director's wife, and the wives of the two manufacturers. In fact, all the notabilities of the place seemed to have assembled. The gentlemen had gone, it was said, to view some prospect not very far off, and would soon be back.

The conversation was not very lively, and Eric's appearance awakened interest. The director's wife, a large striking figure — Bella called her the lay figure, for she knew how to dress well, and everything became her — raised her opera-glass and looked round upon the landscape, but took advantage of this survey to get a nearer look at Eric's face. The manner in which she then balanced the glass in her hand seemed to say that she was not altogether displeased with the view.

After the first question, how long it was since Eric had seen the Rhine, and after he had informed them how everything had appeared under a new aspect, and had affected him almost to intoxication, he said it was very pleasant to see the young ladies wearing wreaths of fresh flowers and leaves upon their heads. To this he added the remark, that though it was natural and fitting for ladies to wear wreaths on their heads, it was very comical when men, even on some rural excursion, allowed the black cylinder hat to be ornamented with a wreath by some fair hand.

Insignificant as was the observation, the tone in which Eric uttered it gave peculiar pleasure, and the whole circle smiled in a friendly manner; they at once felt that here was a person of original and suggestive ideas.

Bella knew how to bring out a guest in conversation. "Did not the Greeks and Romans, Captain," she asked, "wear badges of distinction upon the head, while we, who plume ourselves so much about our hearts, wear ours upon the breast?" Then she spoke of an ancient wreath of victory she had seen at Rome, and asked Eric whether there were different classes of wreaths. Without intending it Eric described the various kinds of crowns given to victory, and it excited much merriment when he spoke of the wreath made of grass, which a general received who had relieved a besieged city.

The girls, who stood in groups at one side, made a pretence of calling out to a handsome boy playing at the fountain below, and sprang down the little hill with flying garments. On reaching the fountain, they troubled themselves no further about the little boy they had called to, but talked with one another about the stranger, and how interesting he was.

"He is handsomer than the architect," said the apothecary's daughter.

"And he is even handsomer than Herr von Pranken," added Hildegard, the school-director's daughter.

Lina enjoyed the enviable advantage of being able to relate that she had met him yesterday at the island convent; her father had rightly guessed that he was of French descent, for his father had belonged to the immigrating Huguenots, as his name indicated. The apothecary's daughter, who plumed herself highly upon her brother's being a lieutenant, promised to obtain from him more definite information about the captain.

In her free way, Lina proposed that they should weave a garland and place it unexpectedly on the bare head of the stranger. The wreath was speedily got ready, but no one of the girls, not even Lina, ventured to complete the strange proposal.

Meanwhile Eric was sitting amidst the circle of ladies, and he expressed his sincere envy of those persons who live among such beautiful natural scenery; they might not always be conscious of it, but it had a

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bracing influence upon the spirit, and there was a keen sense of loss when removed into less interesting scenes. No one ventured to make any reply, until Bella remarked, — "Praise of the landscape in which we live is a sort of flattery to us, as if we ourselves, our dress, our house, or anything belonging to us, should be praised."

All assented, although it was not evident whether Bella had expressed approval or disapproval. Then she asked Eric concerning his mother, and as if incidentally, but not without emphasis, alluded to the sudden death of her brother, Baron von Burgholz. Those present knew now that Eric was of partially noble descent. Bella spoke so easily that speaking seemed a wholly secondary matter to her, while seeing and being seen were the things of real importance. She hardly moved a feature in speaking, scarcely even the lips, and only in smiling exhibited a full row of small white teeth.

Bella knew that Eric was looking at her attentively while he spoke, and composedly as if she stood before a mirror, she offered her face to his gaze. She then introduced Eric, in the most friendly way, to the agreeable head-forester's wife, a fine singer, asking at the same time if he still kept up his singing; he replied that he had been for some years out of practice.

The evening was unusually sultry, and the air was close and hot over mountain and valley.

A thunder storm was coming up in the distance. They discussed whether they should wait for the storm at Wolfsgarten or return home immediately. "If the gentlemen were only here to decide." The pleasant forester's lady confessed that she was afraid of a thunder storm.

"Then you and your sister are in sympathy," said Eric.

"O," said the sister, "I am not at all afraid."

"Excuse me; I did not mean you, but the beautiful songstress dwelling here in the thicket. Do you not notice that Mrs. Nightingale, who sang so spiritedly a few moments since, is now suddenly dumb?" All were very merry over this remark, and now each told what she did with herself during a thunder storm.

"I think," said Eric, "that we can find out not so much the character, as the vegetative life of the brain, the nervous temperament, as it is called, by observing the effect which a thunder storm has upon us. We are so far removed from the life of nature, that when changes take place in the atmosphere that can be heard and seen, we are taken by surprise, as if a voice should suddenly call to us out of the still air, 'Attend! thou art walking and breathing in a world full of mystery!'"

"Ah, here come the gentlemen!" it was suddenly called out. Two handsome pointers springing into the garden went round and round Pranken's dog, who had been abroad, smelling at him inquiringly, as if they would get out of him the results of his experience. The men came immediately after the dogs.

Eric immediately recognised Count Clodwig, before his name was mentioned. His fine, well-preserved person, the constant friendliness of expression on his smoothly shaven, elderly face, as yet unwrinkled, — this could be no other than the Count Clodwig von Wolfsgarten; all the rest had grouped themselves around him as a centre, and exhibited a sort of deference, as if he were the prince of the land. He possessed two peculiar characteristics seldom found together: he attracted love, and at the same time commanded homage; and although he never exhibited any aristocratic haughtiness, and treated each one in a friendly and kindly manner, it seemed only a matter of course for him to take the lead.

When Eric was introduced to him, his countenance immediately lighted up, every feature beaming with happy thoughts. "You are welcome; as the son of my Roman friend you have inherited my friendship," he said, pressing more closely with his left hand the spectacles over his eyes.

His manner of speaking was so moderate and agreeable that he seemed to be no stranger; while there was in the accent something so calm and measured, that any striking novelty was received from him as something for which you were unconsciously prepared. He had always the same demeanor, a steady composure, and a certain deliberateness, never making haste, having always time enough, and preserving a straight-forward uprightness befitting an old man. When Eric expressed the happiness it gave him to inherit the count's friendship towards his father, and that of the countess towards his mother, a still warmer friendliness beamed from Clodwig's countenance.

"You have exactly your father's voice," he said. "It was a hard stroke to me when I heard of his death, for I had thought of writing to him for several years, but delayed until it was too late."

When Eric was introduced now by Clodwig to the rest of the gentlemen, it seemed as if this man invested him with his own dignity. "Here I make you acquainted

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with a good comrade," said Clodwig, with a significant smile, whilst he introduced him to an old gentleman, having a broad red face, and snow-white hair trimmed very close. "This is our major — Major Grassler."

The major nodded pleasantly, extending to Eric a hand to which the forefinger was wanting; but the old man could still press strongly the stranger's hand. He nodded again, but said nothing.

The other gentlemen were also introduced by the count; one of these, a handsome young man, with a dark-brown face and fine beard and moustache, the architect Erhardt, took his leave directly, as he had an appointment at the limestone quarry. The school-director informed Eric that he had been also a pupil of Professor Einsiedel.

The major was called out of the men's circle by the ladies; they took him to task, the wife of the Justice leading off, for having left them and gone off with the gentlemen, while always before he had been very attentive to the ladies, and their faithful knight. Now he was to make amends.

The major had just seated himself when the girls placed upon his white head the crown intended for Eric. He nodded merrily, and desired that a mirror should be brought, to see how he looked. He pointed the forefinger of his left hand to Lina, and asked her if that was one of the things she learned at the convent.

It soon became evident that the major was the target for shafts of wit, a position which some one in every society voluntarily must assume or submit to perforce. The major conferred upon his acquaintance more pleasure than he was aware of, for every one smiled in a friendly way when he was thought of or spoken about.

A gust of wind came down over the plain; the flag upon the mansion was lowered; the upholstered chairs were speedily put under the covering of the piazza; and all had a feeling of comfort, as they sat sociably together in the well-lighted drawing-room, while the storm raged outside.

For some time no other subject could be talked about than the storm. The major told of a slight skirmish in which he had been engaged in the midst of the most fearful thunder and lightning; he expressed himself clumsily, but they understood his meaning, how horrible it was for them to be murdering each other, while the heavens were speaking. The Justice told of a young fellow who was about to take a false oath, and had just raised up his hand, when a sudden thunder-clap caused him to drop it, crying out, "I am guilty." The forester added laughing, that a thunder storm was a very nice thing, as the wild game afterwards was very abundant. The school-director gave an exceedingly graphic description of the difficulty of keeping children in the school-room occupied, as one could not continue the ordinary instruction, and yet one did not know what should be done with them.

All eyes were turned upon Eric as if to inquire what he had to say, and he remarked in an easy tone, — "What here possesses the soul as a raging storm is down there, on the lower Rhine, and above there, in Alsace, a distant heat lightning which cools off the excessive heat of the daytime. People sit there enjoying themselves in gardens and balconies, breathing in the pure air in quiet contemplation. I might say that there are geographical boundaries and distinct zones of feeling."

Drawing out this idea at length, he was able to make them wholly forget the present. The forester's wife, who had been sitting in the dark in the adjoining room with her hand over her eyes, came into the drawing-room at these words of Eric, which she must have heard, and seemed relieved of all fear.

Eric spoke for a long time. Though his varied experience might have taught him a different lesson, he still believed that people always wished to get something in conversation, to gain clearer ideas, and not merely to while away the time. Hence, when he conversed, he gave out his whole soul, the very best he had, and did not fear that behind his back they would call his animated utterances pertness and vanity. He had a talent for society; even more than that, for he placed himself in the position of him whom he addressed, and this one soon felt that Eric saw farther than he himself did, and that he spoke not out of presumption, but out of benevolence.

There is something really imposing in a man who clearly and fluently expresses his ideas to other people; their own thought is brought to light, and they are thankful for the boon. But most persons are imposed upon by the "Sir Oracle" who gives them to understand, "I am speaking of things which you do not and cannot comprehend;" and the Sir Oracles carry so much the greater weight of influence.

The men, and more particularly the Justice and the school-director, shrugged their shoulders. Eric's enthusiasm and his unreserved unfolding of his own interior life had in it something odd, even wounding to some of the men. They felt that this strange manner, this extraordinary revelation of

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character, this pouring out of one's best, was attractive to the ladies, and that they, getting in a word incidentally and without being able to complete a thought, or round off a period, were wholly cast into the shade. The Justice, observing the beaming eyes of his daughter and of the forester's wife, whispered to the school-director, "This is a dangerous person."

The company broke up into groups. Eric stood with Clodwig in the bow-window, and they looked out upon the night. The lightning flashed over the distant mountains, sometimes lighting up a peak in the horizon, sometimes making a rift in the sky, as if behind it were another sky, while the thunder rolled, shaking the ceiling and tinkling the pendent prisms of the chandelier.

"There are circumstances and events which occur and repeat themselves as if they had already passed before us in a dream," Clodwig began. "Just as I now stand here with you, I stood with your father in the Roman Campagna. I know not how it chanced, but we spoke of that view in which the things of the world are regarded under the aspect of the infinite, and then your father said, — methinks I still hear his voice, — 'Only when we take in the life of humanity as a whole do we have, as thinkers, that rest which the believers receive from faith, for then the world lives to us as to them, in the oneness of God's thought. He who follows up only the individual ant cannot comprehend its zigzag track, or its fate as it suddenly falls into the hole of the ant-lion, who must also get a living. But he who regards the ant-hill as a whole —'"

Clodwig suddenly stopped. From the valley they heard the shrill whistle of the locomotive, and the hollow rumbling of the train of cars.

"But at that time," he continued after a pause, and his face was lighted up by a sudden flash of lightning, "at that time no locomotive's whistle broke in upon our quiet meditation."

"And yet," said Eric, "I do not like to regard this shrill tone as a discord."

"Go on, I am curious to hear why not."

"Is it not grand that human beings continue their ordinary pursuits in the midst of nature's disturbances? In our modern age an unalterable system of movements is seen to be continually operating upon our earth. May it not be said that all our doing is but a preparation of the way, a making straight the path, so that the eternal forces of nature may move in freedom? The man of this new age has the railroad to serve him."

Clodwig grasped Eric's hand. Bright flashes of lightning illumined the beaming face of the young man and the serene countenance of the old count. Clodwig pressed warmly Eric's hand, as if he would say, "Welcome again! now art thou truly mine." Love, suddenly taking possession of two hearts, is said to make them one; and is it not also true of friendship?

It was so here. The two confronted each other, not with any foreboding, or excitement of feeling, but with a clear and firm recognition that each had found his own choicest possession; they felt that they belonged to each other, and it was entirely forgotten that they had looked into each other's eyes for the first time only a few moments before. They had become united in the pure thought of the Eternal that has no measure of time; they may have stood there speechless for a long time after unclasping their hands; they were united, and they were one without the need of word, without external sign.

In a voice full of emotion, as if he had a secret to reveal, which he could hardly open his lips to utter, and yet which he must not withhold, Clodwig said, — "In such storms I have often thought of that former period when the whole land from here to the Odenwald was a great lake, out of which the mountain peaks towered as islands, until the water forced for itself a channel through the wall of rock. And have you, my young friend, ever entertained the thought that chaos may come again?"

"Yes, indeed; but we cannot transport ourselves into the pre-human or post-human period. We can only fill out, according to our strength, our allotted time of three score years and ten." The major now came and invited them to go into the inner saloon, where the company had assembled. Clodwig again stroked softly Eric's hand, saying, "Will you come?" Like two lovers who have just given a secret kiss and an embrace, they rejoined the company. No one suspected why their countenances were so radiant.

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CHAPTER VII.

AN ILLUMINATING FLASH.

After the crisis of a storm has passed, a company of persons become very lively, and have an additional feeling of home. They had withdrawn into the inner music saloon, whose vaulted ceiling, brilliantly lighted up, had even a festive appearance. Half way up the walls of the room four balconies projected, and in the centre was the grand piano. On one side was a circular seat, upon an elevated platform, where Bella was sitting with the happy Justice's wife on the right, and the forester's wife on the left.

The young girls were promenading arm in arm through the saloon, and Pranken, full of his jokes, accompanied them; he carried in his hand a rose out of Lina's wreath; when Clodwig and Eric joined the circle, with the major, the young people came up to them.

Bella asked the major whether the work upon the castle, which Herr Sonnenkamp had begun to rebuild, was still continued. The major nodded; he always nodded several times before he spoke, as if carefully arranging beforehand what he should say.

He asserted very confidently that they would find a spring in the castle court-yard. Clodwig begged him to preserve carefully every relic of the middle ages and the Roman period, and promised soon to go himself, and superintend the excavations. The head-forester jestingly observed, "Herr Sonnenkamp,"—everybody called him Herr, but with a peculiar accent, as if they wished no further acquaintance with him, — "Herr Sonnenkamp will probably now give his name to the restored castle."

When Herr Sonnenkamp's name was mentioned, it seemed as if a dam had been carried away, and the conversation rushed in headlong from all quarters.

"Herr Sonnenkamp has a deal of understanding," said the school-director, "but Molière maliciously observes, that the rich man's understanding is in his pocket."

The apothecary added, "Herr Sonnenkamp loves to represent himself as an incorrigible sinner, in the hope that nobody will believe him; but people do believe him."

Eric caught the names Herr Sonnenkamp, Frau Ceres, Manna, Roland, Frau Perini; it was like the chirping of birds in the woods, all sounds mingled together, and no one melody distinctly heard. The wife of the Justice, with a significant glance towards Pranken, said, "Men like the major and Herr von Pranken can take up at once such mysterious, interloping people from abroad, but ladies must be more reserved." Then she gave it to be understood that the old established families could not be too strict in receiving foreign intruders.

In a somewhat forced humor, Bella joked about the long nails of Frau Ceres; but her lips trembled when Clodwig said very sharply, "Among the Indians long nails take the place of family descent, and the one perhaps is as good as the other."

All were amazed when Clodwig spoke so disparagingly of the nobility. He seemed displeased at the detracting remarks upon the Sonnenkamp family; he was above all meanness, and everything small and invidious was as offensive to him as a disagreeable odor. Turning to Eric, he said, — "Herr Sonnenkamp, the present subject of the conversation, is the owner of many millions. To acquire such immense wealth is an evidence of strength; or, I should rather say, to acquire great wealth shows great vigor; to keep it requires great wisdom; and to use it well is a virtue and an art."

He paused, and as no one spoke, he continued, — "Riches have a certain title to respect; riches, especially one's own acquisition, are an evidence of activity and service. Far easier does it appear to me to be a prince, than to be a man of such excessive wealth. Such an accumulation of power is apt to make men arbitrary; a very wealthy man lives in an atmosphere saturated, as it were, with the consciousness of supreme power, and ceases to be an individual personality, and the whole world assumes to him the aspect of a price-current list. Have you ever met such a man?"

Before Eric could reply, Pranken roughly broke in, "Captain Dournay wishes to become the tutor of the young Sonnenkamp." All eyes were directed towards Eric; he was regarded as if he had been suddenly transformed, and clad in a beggar's garment. The men nodded to each other and shrugged their shoulders; a man engaging in a private employment, and such an employment too, had lost all title to consideration. The ladies looked at him compassionately. Eric saw nothing of all this. He did not know what Pranken meant by this surprising revelation; he felt that he must make some reply, but knew not what to say.

A painful pause followed Pranken's communication. Clodwig had placed his hands upon his lips, that had become very pale. At last he said, "Such an appointment will contribute to your honor, and to the honor and good fortune of Herr Sonnenkamp."

Eric felt a broad hand laid upon his shoulder, and on looking round he gazed into the smiling countenance of the major,

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who, pointing several times with his left hand to his heart, said at last, "The count has expressed what I wished to say, but it is better for him to have said it, and he has done it much better than I could. Carry out your purpose, comrade."

Pranken now came up, and said, in a very affable tone, that it was he who had advised and recommended Eric. Lina had opened a window, and called out in a clear voice, "The storm is over."

A fresh, fragrant air streaming into the saloon gave relief to their constraint, and every one breathed freely again. A gentle rain still pattered down, but the nightingales were again singing in the woods. They now urged the forester's wife to sing. She declined, but could not withstand the request of Bella, who very seldom played, that she would sing to her accompaniment.

The forester's wife sang some songs with so fresh and youthful a voice, so clear and simple, that the hearts of all the hearers were touched. Lina also was urged to sing. She insisted that she could not to-day, but, on receiving a reproving glance from her mother, she seated herself at the piano, sang some notes, and then gave up. Without embarrassment, as if nothing had happened, she said, "I have now proved to you that I can't sing to-day."

The wife of the Justice bit her lips, and breathed hard with quivering nostrils, at the foolish girl acting as if nothing was the matter. The forester's wife sang another song; and now Lina, placing herself at her side, said that she would sing a duet, but she could not sing alone. And she did sing, in a fresh soprano voice, somewhat timidly, but with clear and pure tone.

With unconscious simplicity, as if he were an old acquaintance, she now asked Eric to sing. The whole company united in the request, but Eric positively declined, and looked up surprised when Pranken joined in with the remark, "The captain is right in not exhibiting at once all his varied talents." It was said in the gentlest tone, but the sarcastic point was unmistakable.

"I thank you for standing by me like a good comrade," said Eric, looking round.

The sky was clear, only it still lightened over the Taunus mountains. The company took their leave, with many thanks for the delightful day they had spent, and the charming evening. Even the perpetually silent "Mrs. Lay-figure" now spoke, appearing in her fashionable new hood, which she had put on very becomingly. Just as they were departing, the physician made his appearance. He had been detained by the storm while visiting a patient in a neighboring village. He drove off with the rest, having scarcely had time to say good-evening to the Count Clodwig and Bella.

Bella drew a long breath when the reception was all over. There was much conversation in the different carriages, but in one there was weeping, for Lina received a sharp scolding for her behavior, in acting as if she were nothing but a stupid, simple country girl. Instead of being sprightly and making the most of herself, she behaved as if she had come, only an hour before, from keeping geese. Lina had for a long time been accustomed to these violent reproofs, but she seemed today to take them more feelingly to heart. She had been so happy, that now the severe lecture came doubly hard. She silently wept.

The Justice, who was no justice of the peace in his own family, took no part in this feminine outbreak. Not until he was ready to take a fresh cigar did he say, "This loquacious Dournay seems to me a dangerous man."

"I think him very agreeable."

"Woman's logic! as if the amiability, instead of excluding, did not rather include, the dangerous element. Don't you see through this very transparent intrigue?"

"No."

"Then put together these facts: we come across him at the convent, where the daughter of this exceedingly wealthy Herr Sonnenkamp is living, and he acts as if he knew no one, and had no special end in view. Now he wants to be the tutor of young Sonnenkamp. Ha! what a flash!"

A bright flash of lightning illumined not only the landscape, but the relation in which several people stood to each other. Especially the Eden villa was as clearly defined in every part as if it were only a few paces off.

"Just see," continued the Justice, "how this great pile of buildings and the park are lighted up, and no one knows what is brewing up here. Amazing world! Baron Pranken introduces this Dournay to his sister-in-law and his father-in-law as a friend, and yet these two men are sworn enemies."

The wife of the Justice was vexed with her husband. He was so animated, and made such keen observations, alone with her and at home, while in society he had hardly a word to say, and let others bear away all the honors.

"Who is the father-in-law you speak of?" she asked, for the sake of saying something.

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"Why, Herr Sonnenkamp, of course; at least, he is to be. That inexhaustible wealth of his is guano for the Baron Pranken; he needs it, and why should he trouble himself about where it comes from?"

Lina threw her veil over her face, and shut her eyes. The Justice now explained the special reasons why neither he, nor his wife, should become mixed up in these affairs.

"This captain-doctor is a dangerous man, dangerous in many respects." This was his last remark, and they were silent until they reached home.

CHAPTER VIII.

CONFESSION OF TWO KINDS.

Otto von Pranken walked with his sister Bella up and down the garden. Otto informed her that he had recommended Eric to Herr Sonnenkamp, but that he was already very sorry for it.

Bella, who was always out of humor after she had made herself a victim to the collation, turned now her ill humor against her brother, who had introduced to her as a fitting guest one who was, or wished to be, a menial, and above all, a menial of that Herr Sonnenkamp. With mischievous satisfaction she added thereto, that Otto must take delight in boldly leaping over difficulties, since he had recommended into the family such an attractive person as this doctor—she made use of that title as being inferior to that of captain. The natural consequence would be that the daughter of the house would fall in love with her brother's tutor.

"This Herr Dournay," she ended by saying, "is a very attractive person, not merely because he is extraordinarily handsome, but yet more because he possesses a romantic open-heartedness and honesty. Whether it is genuine or assumed, at any rate, it tells, and particularly with a girl of seventeen just out of a convent."

Otto answered good naturedly, that he had given his sister credit for a less commonplace imagination; moreover, that Eric was an acknowledged woman-hater, who would never love a real woman of flesh and blood. Yet Pranken declared his intention of calling the next morning at the villa, and telling Herr Sonnenkamp in confidence how very reluctant he was to give the recommendation; that he should beseech him to dismiss the applicant politely, for he might with propriety and justice say that Eric would inoculate the boy with radical ideas; yes, that it might further be said to Herr Sonnenkamp, that to receive Eric would be displeasing at court. This last reason, he thought, would carry all before it. Pranken had worked himself into the belief that to have a secure position in the court-circle was the highest that Herr Sonnenkamp could aim at.

Bella rejected this plan; she took pleasure in inciting her brother to gain the victory over such an opponent; that would inspire him with fresh animation. Moreover, that it might be well to offset the Lady Perini, whose ecclesiastical tendencies no one had thoroughly fathomed, by a man who was a representative of the world, and under obligations of gratitude to them. And further it was not to be doubted that a perpetual, secret war would exist between Donna Perini and this over-confident Dournay, so that, whatever might happen, they would have the regulation and disposal of matters in their own hands.

Bella forgot all her vexation, for a whole web of intrigue unfolded itself clearly to her sight, agreeable in the prosecution, and tending to one result. She was the confidante of Fraulein Perini, but she herself did not wholly trust her, and Otto must remain intimate with Eric; and in this way, they would hold the Sonnenkamp family in their hands, for Eric would undoubtedly acquire great influence.

Otto strenuously resisted the carrying out of the part assigned to him, but he was not let off. A cat sitting quiet and breathless before a mouse-hole will not be enticed away, for she knows that the mouse will come out; it is nibbling already; and then there is a successful spring. Bella had one means of inducing her brother to do as she wished; she need only repeat to him how irresistible he was, and how necessary it was for him to gain that self-confidence which had hitherto stood him in such good part. Otto was not fully convinced, but he was persuaded that he soon would be. And, moreover, this Dournay was a poor man whom one must help; he had taken today the sudden revelation of his position in life with a good grace, and behaved very well.

Whilst brother and sister promenaded in the garden, Eric sat in the study of Count Clodwig, that was lighted by a branching lamp. They sat opposite, in arm-chairs, at the long writing-table. "I regret," Clodwig began, "that the physician came so late; he has a rough rind, but a sound heart. I think that you and he will be good friends."

Eric said nothing, and Clodwig continued: "I cannot understand why my brother-in-law, in his peculiar manner, informed

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the company so suddenly of your intention. Now it is a common topic of conversation, and your excellent project loses its first naïve charm."

Eric replied with great decision, that we must allow the deed resolved upon in meditation to come into the cold sharp air of the critical understanding.

Clodwig again gazed at him fixedly, apparently surprised that this man should be so well armed at all points; and placing his small hand upon a portfolio before him as if he were writing down something new, he resumed: —

"I have, to-day, been confirmed anew in an old opinion. People generally regard private employment as a degradation, regardless of the consideration that the important thing is, in what spirit one serves, and not whom he serves. 'I serve,' is the motto of my maternal ancestors."

The old man paused, and Eric did not know whether he was going on, or waited for a reply; but Clodwig continued: "It is regarded as highly honorable when a general officer, or a state official undertakes the education of a prince; but is it any the less honorable to engage in the work of educating thirty peasant lads, or to devote one's self, as you do, to the bringing up of this wealthy youth? And now I have one request to make of you."

"My only desire is to grant it."

"Will you tell me as exactly as possible how you have so — I mean, how you have become what you are?"

"Most willingly; and I will deserve the honor of being allowed to speak so unreservedly, by not being too modest. I will speak to you as to myself."

Clodwig rang a bell that stood upon the table, and a servant entered. "Robert, what room is assigned to the doctor?" "The brown one directly over the count's chamber." "Let the captain have the balcony chamber." "If the count will pardon me, the luggage of Leonhard, Prince of Saxony, is still in that room." "No matter; and, one thing more, I desire not to be interrupted until I ring."

The servant departed, and Clodwig settled himself in the arm-chair, drawing a plush sofa-blanket over his knees; then he said, "If I shut my eyes, do not think that I am asleep."

In the manner with which Clodwig now bade Eric speak out frankly, there was a trustful kindness, very far removed from all patronizing condescension; it expressed, rather, an intimate sympathy and a most hearty confidence. Eric began.

CHAPTER IV.

A SEEKER.

"I AM twenty-eight years old, and when I review my life, it seems to me so far to have been only a search. One occupation leaves so many faculties dormant, and yet the torture of making a choice must come to an end; and in every calling of life the entire manhood may be maintained and called forth into action.

"I am the child of a perfectly happy marriage, and you know what that means. I shared, from my third year, the education of the Prince Leonhard. There was a perpetual opposition between us, the reason of which I did not discover until later, when an open breach occurred. I then saw for the first time, that a sort of dissimulation, which does not agree with good comradeship, had made me outwardly deferential, and inwardly uneasy and irritated. Perhaps nothing is more opposed to the very nature of a child than a perpetual deference and compliant acquiescence.

"I entered the military school, where I received marked respect, because I had been the comrade of the prince. My father was there my special instructor, and there I lived two years with your brother-in-law. I was not distinguished as a scholar.

"One of the happiest days of my life was the one on which I wore my epaulets for the first time; and though the day on which I laid aside my uniform was not less happy, I am not yet free from inconsistency. I cannot, to this day, see a battery of artillery pass by without feeling my heart beat quicker.

"I travel backwards and forwards, and I pray you to excuse disconnected narration. I have, to-day, been through such a various experience; but I will now endeavor to tell my story more directly and concisely.

"Soon after I became lieutenant, my parents removed to the university city; I was now left alone. I was, for a whole year, contented with myself and happy, like every one around me. I can remember now the very hour of a beautiful autumn afternoon, — I still see the tree, and hear the magpie in its branches, — when I suddenly reined in my horse, and something within me asked, 'What art thou doing in the world? training thyself and thy recruits to kill thy fellow-men in the most scientific manner?'"

"Allow me to ask one question," Clodwig mildly interrupted. "Did the military school never seem to you a school of men, and part of your profession?"

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Eric was confused, and replied in the negative; then collecting his thoughts, he resumed: "I sought to drive away oppressive thoughts, but they would not leave me. I had fallen out with myself and my occupation. I cannot tell you how useless to myself and to the world I seemed to be, —all was empty, bare, desolate. There were days when I was ashamed of my dress, that I, a sound, strong man, should be loafing about so well dressed, my horse perhaps consuming the oats of some poor man."

"That is morbid," Clodwig struck in with vehemence.

"I see it is now; but then it was different in the first stress of feeling. The Crimean war broke out, and I asked for a furlough, in order to become acquainted with actual war. My commander, Prince Leonhard, at the rifle-practice, casually asked me which army I meant to join; and before I could reply, he added, in a caustic tone, 'Would you prefer to enlist with the light French or the heavy Englishman?' My tongue was tied, and I perceived clearly my own want of a clear understanding of my position. How mere a cipher was I, standing there without any knowledge of myself or the world! My outer relations shared in the total ruin of my inner being. Must I relate to you all these petty annoyances? I deserved to have them, for there was in me nothing but contradiction, and my whole life was one single great lie. A uniform had been given me; I was not myself, and I was a poor soldier, for I abandoned myself to the study of philosophy, and wished to solve the riddle of life. I am of a peculiarly companionable, sympathetic nature, and yet the continued life among my fellow-soldiers had become an impossibility.

"I bore it two years, then asked for my discharge; which I received, with the rank of Captain, out of respect to my parents, I think. I was free, at last, and yet, as I said before, it saddened me to break away from my life.

"I was free! It was strange to look out into the world and say, World, what do you want of me? What must I do for you? Here are a thousand employments; which shall I take? I was ready for anything. I had a fine voice, and many people thought that I might become a professional singer, and I received overtures to that effect. But my own inclination led in a very different direction. An earnest longing possessed me to make some sacrifice for my fellow-men. Had I been a devout believer, I think I should have become a monk."

Clodwig opened his eyes and met Eric's beaming glance. After a short pause, Clodwig nodded to Eric, then folded his arms again on his breast, laid his head back, nodded again, and closed his eyes. Eric continued: —

"When I first went through the streets in a civilian's dress, I felt as if I were walking naked before the eyes of men, as one sometimes seems to be in troubled dreams. In such a helpless, forlorn state of feeling, one grows superstitious, and is easily governed by the merest accidents. The first person who met me, and stared at me, as if doubting who I was, was my former captain, who had left the service, and was superintendent of a House of Correction for men. He had seen the notice of my discharge, and remembering some of my former attempts in that direction, asked whether I meant to devote myself entirely to poetry. I answered in the negative, and he told me that he was looking for an assistant. My decision was soon made; I would consecrate myself to the care and elevation of my fallen fellow-men. After entering on my new occupation I wrote to my parents. My father replied to me, that he appreciated my efforts, but foresaw with certainty that my natural love of beauty would make a life among criminals unbearable to me; he was right. I tried with all my might to keep in subjection a longing for the higher luxuries of life, but in vain. I was without that peculiar natural vein, or perhaps had not reached that elevated standpoint, which enables one to look upon and to treat all the aspects of life as so many natural phenomena. In my captain's uniform, I received more respect from the prisoners than in my citizen's dress. This experience was a sort of nightmare to me. Life among the convicts, who were either hardened brutes or cunning hypocrites, became a hell to me, and this hell had one peculiar torment. I fell into a mood of morbid self-criticsm, because I could not forget the world, but was constantly trying to guess the thoughts of others. I tormented myself by imagining what men said of my course. In their eyes I seemed to myself now an idealistic vagabond, if you will allow the expression. This I was not, and would not be, and above all, I was determined that my enemies and deriders should not have the triumph of seeing me the wreck of a fickle and purposeless existence.

"Ah, I vexed myself unnecessarily; for who has time or inclination to look for a man who has disappeared! Men bury the dead, and go back to their every-day work, and so they bury the living too. I do not reproach them for it, it must be so.

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"It became clear to me that I was not fitted for the calling I had chosen. I lived too much within myself, and tried in every event to study the foundation and growth of character of those around me, not willing to acknowledge that the nature and actions of men do not develope themselves so logically as I had thought. Besides, I was too impassioned, and possessed by a constant longing for the beautiful.

"I thought of emigrating to the New World, but what should I do there? Was it worth while to have borne such varied experiences and struggles in order to turn a bit of the primeval forest into a cornfield? Still, one consideration drew me toward America. My father's only brother, the proprietor of a manufactory of jewelry, lived there, but was quite lost to us. He had loved my mother's sister, but his suit was somewhat harshly rejected, and he left Europe for the New World. He cast off all connection with his home and family, and turned out of his house in New York a friend of my father's who guardedly mentioned us to him. He would hear nothing of us, nor even of Europe. I imagined that I could reconcile my uncle, and you know that a man in desperate circumstances looks for salvation to the most adventurous undertakings.

"My good father helped me. What he had always recognized as my true vocation, from which I had turned blinded by the attractions of army life, I now saw plainly. A thirst for loneliness arose within me; I felt that I must find some spot of earth where no disturbing tone could penetrate the inner life, where I could immerse myself in solitude. This solitude which is inclusive of all true life, study, the world of letters, now offered to me. My father helped me, while showing me that my past life was not wasted, but must give me a new direction and a peculiar success. He brought me a birth-day gift which I had received in my cradle; the senate of the University, in which he had lectured before his appointment as tutor of the prince, had bestowed upon me soon after my birth its certificate of matriculation, as a new-born prince receives a military commission."

Clodwig laughed heartily, rubbed his eyes, leaned forward with both hands on his knees, looked kindly at Eric, and begged him to go on.

"I have little more to tell you. I soon schooled myself, or rather my father schooled me, to live for universal ends, and to put aside all personal aims as much as possible. I devoted myself to the study of ancient literature, and every aspiration for the beautiful, which had idealized the poet's vocation for me, found satisfaction in my introduction to the classic world. 'Every man may glory in his industry,' says the poet. I worked faithfully, and felt only in my father's house the happiness of a child, and in my youth the joy of mental growth. My father hoped that success would be granted me where he had failed; he made me heir of those ideas which he could neither establish as scientific truth, nor impart from his professor's chair. If there ever were a happy home, made holy by lofty aspiration, it was my parents' house. There my younger brother died, now very nearly a year ago; my father, who already was sorely sick at heart, with all his stoic fortitude could not bear this blow. It is two months since he also died. I kept down the anguish of my bereavement, finished my studies, and received my doctor's degree a few days ago. My mother and I formed various plans, but have not yet decided upon any. I made this excursion to the Rhine in compliance with my mother's advice, for I have been working very hard; on my return we meant to come to some decision. I met your brother-in-law, and I feel it my duty not to turn away from the opening which has offered. I am ready to enter into private service, knowing what I undertake, and believing that I am thoroughly equipped for it. There was a time when I thought I could find satisfaction only in working for some great public interest; now I should be content to educate a single human being, still more to co-operate in training to a fitness for his great duties one, who, by his future lordship over vast possessions, represents in himself manifold human interests.

"I have come to the end of my story. I do not wish that any one should think better of me than I deserve, but I also wish to pass for what I believe I am. I am neither modest nor conceited; I may be in dangerous ignorance, for I do not in the least know how I am regarded by others; I have shown only what I find in myself by honest self-examination. I mean to be a teacher. He who would live in the spirit, and has not the artist's creative power, must be a teacher; for the teacher is, so to speak, the artisan of the higher being, and, like every artisan, is so much the better workman, or teacher, the more of the artist spirit he has and uses. A thought is the best gift which man can bestow upon man, and what I give my pupil is no longer my own. But pardon me for having fallen into this vein of

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preaching. I have shown you my whole life, as well as I can; where I have left any gaps, pray question me."

"Nothing further is needed," said Clodwig, rising, and quietly laying aside the sofa-blanket. "Only one question. Have you never had the desire to marry, or has that not entered into your plans?"

"No, I shall not marry. I have heard so many men say, 'Yes, ideals, I had them too, but now I live in and for my family.' I will not sacrifice everything higher to the caprice of a pretty woman. I know that I am at variance with the world; I cannot dissemble, nor can I change my own way of thinking, nor bring others over to mine. I have set myself a difficult life-task, which can be best carried out alone."

Clodwig stepped quickly towards Eric and said: —

"I give you my hand again. This hand shall never be withdrawn from you, so long as it has life. I had something else in view for you, but now I cannot and need not speak of it; I will subdue my own wishes. Enough; press on quietly and firmly towards your goal; whatever I can do to help you reach it, you have a right to demand. Remember you have a claim upon me in every situation and condition of your life. You cannot yet estimate what you have given, and are still giving me. Good night, my dear young friend."

The count hastily withdrew, as if to avoid any further emotion. Eric stood still, looking at the empty chair and the sofa-blanket as if all were a dream, until a servant came, and, in a very respectful manner, conducted him to his room.

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CHAPTER X.

THE GOOD HOST.

When a man has laid open his whole history to another, he often seems to himself emptied, hollow, and void, — what is left of him? how small and contemptible he appears! But it was quite otherwise with Eric. From a tower below in the valley rang clear a silver-toned midnight bell, hung there in ancient times by a noble lady, to guide the lost wanderer in the forest to a human dwelling. Eric heard it, and saw in fancy the confessional in the church, with its believers bending before it, or passing out into the world again made strong by its blessing. He had confessed to a man whose life was consecrated by a pure spirit, and felt himself not impoverished, but elevated and strengthened, armed with self-knowledge for every relation of life.

He opened the window, and inhaled the cool, fragrant air of night. Over the valley hung a thin mist; the clocks in the villages struck midnight, and the Wolfsgarten clock chimed in sweet and low. Eric resigned himself to the influence of nature's life and power as it presses upward in the tree-trunks, moves in the branches, and refreshes every bud. In the distance rolled a railway train. The nightingales sang loudly, then suddenly ceased as if overpowered by sleep.

In nebulous forms, familiar and strange figures gathered around Eric. How much he had experienced in this one day, though he had not yet crossed the threshold of the house where perhaps his future lot was cast! He had reviewed his past life, and had found a home of which he had not dreamed yesterday. Ah, how great and rich is the world, and true comrades live in it waiting only for our summons and the greeting of friendly eyes!

All the fulness of life in the immortality of nature and the human spirit flooded Eric's being. He felt a blessed elation; he had given up his life, it was taken from him; he was freed from self, and lived and soared in the infinite.

The moon rose over the mountains, a whispering thrill rustled through the wood, the nightingale sang loud again, the mists rose from the valley and vanished, and one broad beam glittered on a glass dome in the distance. There lay Villa Eden.

Only after a vigorous resistance Eric finally yielded to weariness and closed the window. A black trunk marked with the crest of Prince Leonhard first attracted his notice, and he smiled to see how Clodwig had shown his household in what honor he held his guest; this room had been occupied by the Prince a few days before. Eric then gazed long on a bust of Medusa, fascinated by the grand, powerful, beautiful face; on the head with its wildly disordered locks were two wide-spread wings; below the heavy frowning brow gleamed the great death-dealing eyes; the mouth was haughtily curved, and on the lips lay scornful, defiant words; under the chin two snakes were knotted together like a kerchief. The aspect of the head was at once repulsive and fascinating.

Opposite the Medusa stood a cast of the Victory of Rauch, that wonderful countenance recalling the face of Queen Louisa, the noble head with its garland of oak-leaves not raised, but bent as if in thought and self-control. . . A strange pair were those two busts! but there was no more time to dwell upon them. Eric was overcome by sleep, but woke again after a few hours, when day had scarcely dawned.

There are hours and days of joyous and buoyant feeling, as if we had found the key to all hearts; as if we held in our hands the magic wand which reveals all living springs, and brings us near to every soul as to a friend and a brother. The world is purified, the soul pervaded by the deep feeling of unalloyed blessedness, which is nothing but breathing, living, loving.

Encompassed by such an atmosphere, Eric stood at the window and looked out over the river to the mountains beyond, the castles, the towns, the villages, on the banks and on the heights. Everywhere thou art at home, thou art living in a beautiful world. He went at once into the open air, and strode on not as if he were walking, but as if borne onward by some ineffable power. Drops of rain from the last night's storm hung upon the tender green of the foliage, on the grass and flowers; no breeze stirred the air, and frequent rain-drops, like a sudden shower, pattered down from the overhanging branches. A ray of sunlight now gleams upon every leaf and twig, and awakens an inexpressible movement; the blackbird sings in the copse, and with his clear, shrill tone is heard far above all the intermingling chorus of melodies.

Eric stood motionless near a covered pavilion on the very ridge of the mountain, and gazed long at a kite hovering with outspread wings over the summit, and then letting itself down into the wood on the other side of the river. What made him think at that moment of Herr Sonnen-

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kamp? Was it envy and dread of the little bird, whom evil tongues called a bird of prey; and has he not the right to live according to his might?

Eric's thoughts were wafted toward the boy, longing to mingle in his dreams, and whisper to him, I am coming to thee. He endeavored for a long time to get sight of the glass dome, but it was nowhere visible. He went away from the river to an elevated plain, from which there was again a view of valleys, heights, and mountains.

He stood in the midst of an extensive field, and for the first time saw a vineyard which was just being planted. The laborers held implements, like augurs, in their hands, and making with them holes in the loose earth, they set out the young shoots in rows.

He saluted the laborers, and they answered him cheerfully, feeling from the sound of his voice that he greeted every stranger as a brother. He inquired how long it would be before the first vintage, and when an old man answered clearly all his questions, he felt a new refreshment.

This conversation brought him back from his state of excitement, back from his wandering into the infinite, again to the earth. He went away expressing his thanks, and realising that he must bring this strain of lofty feeling into subjection to actual life. He met laborers who were going to a limestone quarry. He joined them, and learned that this also belonged to the count, who had leased all his lands, not retaining for himself even the management.

Receiving a friendly greeting from the overseer, he was shown a manufactory of cement near by, and saw paving-tiles from excellent patterns of the time of the Renaissance, which Clodwig had recommended, and which found a ready sale.

Eric returned to the Castle, refreshed by the breath of nature as well as by this glance into actual human life. A servant told him that the count was expecting him. Clodwig, already fully dressed for the day, took his guest by the hand, saying, "I shall ask you by and by many questions, but only one now: — did your father despair at the last, or — how shall I express it? — did he die in the belief of an orderly and progressive unfolding of the social and moral world?"

Eric then depicted in vivid language derived from his own recollections, and under the inspiring influence of his morning's exhilaration, how his father, on the last night of his life, congratulated his son that he was born into the new age, which need no longer exhaust itself against opposing forms of violence. "My son," he said, "my heart thrills with joy, when I contemplate how in this century a beauty, a freedom, and a brotherly love unfold themselves which existed to us only in the germ. As one example, my son, see how the State now educates its children, and does it in a way that no Solon, no Socrates, ever could imagine. Thou wilt live in a time when it will hardly be conceived that there were slaves, serfs, bondmen, monopolies, and the whole trumpery of a false world."

Eric added how happy it made him, that his father had departed in such a cheerful mood, and that he, as a son, could so fully enter into his hopes, and carry them out into life. He spoke in such an excitable manner, that Clodwig placed his hand on his shoulder and said, "We will not, in the morning, take such a distant flight." He expressed also his satisfaction that he could enter so fully into the life of the coming generation, for he had always been troubled lest he might lose all hold upon the new time.

"We have had our morning devotions, now let us go to breakfast," he said, turning round easily as he got up from his seat. "Yet one more question: did your father never explain to you what occurred at his sudden — you know what I mean — loss of favor at court?"

"Certainly; my father told me the whole, circumstantially."

"And did he not forbid you to speak of it to any one?"

"To others, but not to you."

"Did he mention me by name?"

"No, but he expressly enjoined it upon me to inform those whom I honored with my whole soul, and so I can tell you."

"Speak rather low," Clodwig enjoined, and Eric went on.

"My father, in that last interview which no one knew anything about, was to have received from the hand of the sovereign a title of nobility, in order that he might be appointed to an office at court. He said to the sovereign, 'Your highness, you make null the blessing of the long years in which I have spent my best strength in the education of my youthful prince, if you think I accept this on my own account, or that I regard it as something belonging to the age in which we live.' 'I do not make a jest of such things,' the prince replied. 'Neither do I,' said my father.

"Years after, his lips trembled as he related this to me, and he said, that that moment, when he stood face to face with his pupil speechless, was the bitterest moment of his life."

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A silent pause now ensued between Eric and Clodwig, until the latter said finally, "I understand, I understand; let us go."

They went into the breakfast-room on the ground floor, the doors of which were wide open. Bella soon appeared; she thought that Eric looked at her scrutinisingly, and quickly turning away, she went to a side table to prepare the coffee.

"My wife," said Clodwig, "has already sent a messenger, this morning, to Fräulein Perini, and I have added a message to Herr Sonnenkamp, that you, dear Dournay, would present yourself this evening, or, what would be better, early to-morrow morning."

"And I am to ask you to excuse my brother, who has set out, early this morning, in company with a young man whom they call here the Wine-chevalier, to the horse-market at Mannheim. Will you have coffee or tea?"

"If you please, coffee."

"That is fine, and on the strength of that we are good friends," said Bella, in a lively way. "It is an abominable excess of politeness, when people reply to such a question, 'It makes no difference to me.' If it makes no difference to you, dear polite soul, then give some decided answer, and don't put off the choice upon me."

A merry key was thus struck, and they seated themselves at table. Bella noticed that Eric observed her, and she knew that she looked better in her pretty morning-dress, than in full evening costume. Her movements were very elastic and graceful. She was a tall, noble, well-made person; her soft, dark-auburn hair, now partly loose, was confined by a fine point-lace kerchief, put on with apparent carelessness, as if one had not taken a second look in the mirror, and tied under the chin. Her complexion was fresh, as if she had just bathed her face in milk; and in fact she did wash her face in milk every morning and evening. The expression of her countenance was keen and bright. All was nobly formed, except that she had a thin, compressed upper-lip, which a malicious gentleman at court had once called the lip of a poisoner. It was very vexatious to Bella that her voice was so masculine.

Her personal charms, her cordial and at the same time arch manners, showed to great advantage in the light talk at the breakfast table; and when at intervals she keenly watched Eric, she was surprised at his appearance. Yesterday she had seen him first only in the evening twilight, and afterwards by candle-light. He was manifestly a person to be seen in full daylight; and in fact, there was now a brilliant lighting up of his countenance, for the happy excitement of his whole inner being showed itself in his mien, and he looked at Bella, as if he would say, 'I have become almost the son of thy husband; let the same noble union be formed between us.'

Bella was unusually friendly, perhaps because she had already used a little artifice. A note, written in Italian to Fräulein Perini, cautioned her in terms as decided in meaning, as they were carefully worded in expression, of the necessity of subjecting the new-comer to a sharp examination.

When Clodwig told the messenger that Eric would make his appearance in the evening, or the next morning, she felt herself justified and at rest in regard to her previous artifice; for Clodwig had never before detained a guest with such determination of his own, and no one could even boast of having made it appear that he was not sufficient for himself.

Clodwig and Bella had promised each other to live only to themselves, and until now they had faithfully kept the promise.

"I am a weary soul," Clodwig had said to Bella when he offered her his hand, and she had answered, that she would refresh the weary one. She had cut off every relation with the world, for she knew that friendly visits last only for a few hours or days, and make the solitude afterwards more keenly felt.

Bella was very amiable always, and to everybody, provided everybody always did according to her will, and lived to please her. She really had no love for people and no desire for their society; she wanted nothing from others, and wished only to be left alone. The manifold relations which Clodwig had formerly had with men and women were repugnant to her, and he accommodated himself to the wish of his wife, who lived wholly for him, so far as to reduce his extensive correspondence and his personal intercourse to the smallest possible limit. They kept up a periodical connection with only two social circles in the neighborhood: one of these was the so-called middle-class circle who were invited to collation, as it was named, which we made acquaintance with yesterday; the other was a select circle, of the noble families scattered around, who were invited twice a year. Was this renegade captain now to change all this?

In the triumphant thought that she had banished him, Bella became more and more talkative. Eric could not refrain from highly extolling that mirthful excitement, that exuberant humor which pervades the

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Rhineland, and takes possession of every one who comes within the sphere of its inhabitants. At last he led the conversation again to Sonnenkamp, by remarking that the manner in which the man was spoken about yesterday was very puzzling to him.

Bella in an off-hand manner declared, that she found the man very interesting, although this was going counter to the universal Philistinism; that she regarded him as a conqueror, a bold Berserkir, who had nothing to win for himself in this stock-jobbing age but gold.

There appeared to be a sympathetic attraction between Bella and Sonnenkamp's speculative and daring spirit. Clodwig considerately added,—

"I have often noticed, that so long as a man is accumulating wealth, his prosperity seems to give universal satisfaction; men feel pleased, as if they were accumulating too. But when he has attained his end, they turn round and find fault, where before they had commended. Do you understand anything of horticulture?"

"No."

"Herr Sonnenkamp is a very considerable horticulturist. Is it not strange that in the laying out of parks we have wholly supplanted the formal methods of French gardening, which now turn to the culture of fruit, and find encouragement in the pecuniary profit that governs all such operations? The English excel in swine-raising, their swine being fat sides of bacon with four feet attached; the French, on the other hand, having taken to fruit culture, have succeeded in producing fabulous crops.

"Yes!" he concluded, smiling, "Herr Sonnenkamp is a tree-tutor, and, moreover, a tyrannical tree-trimmer. To-day I can speak out more freely. Sonnenkamp has always been, and will always be, a stranger to me.

"Through all his external polish, and an increasing attention to the cultivation of good manners, a sort of brutishness appears in him, I mean brutishness in its original meaning of an uncultivated state of nature."

"Yes," Bella remarked, "you will have a difficult position, and especially with Roland."

"With Roland?" asked Eric.

"Yes, that is the boy's name. He would like to know much, and learn nothing."

Bella looked round pleased with her clever saying. The parrot in his great cage upon the veranda uttered shrill cries as if scolding. As she rose, Bella said, "There you see my tyrant; a scholar who tyrannises over his teacher in a most shocking manner."

She took the parrot out of his cage, placed him on her shoulder, fondled and caressed him, so that one almost grudged such wasteful prodigality; and her movements were all beautiful, especially the curving of the throat and shoulders.

CHAPTER XI.

MEDUSA AND VICTORIA.

Clodwig looked down for some time after Bella had gone. He nodded to Eric as if he would greet him anew. But Bella soon returned, bearing the parrot on her hand, and stroking it. She walked up and down the room, lingering when Eric related how he had to-day, tearing himself by force away from the view of the river, gone back into the country, and had conversed with many persons.

Clodwig dwelt at length upon his pet theory, that traces of the Roman Colonists were still preserved in the physiognomy and character of the people.

Bella, apparently unwilling to be obliged to hear this again, interrupted, with good-humored impertinence,—"When one turns himself away from the Rhine, he has the feeling, or at least I have, that some one, it may be Father Rhine himself, looks after me and calls out, 'Do turn round!'"

"We men do not always feel that we are looked at," replied Clodwig, and requested Eric to give his opinion about the earthen vase, a present the day before from the Justice, which was standing on a side-table in the breakfast-room. Eric readily complied, and they went into the adjoining room, filled with a great variety of articles found buried in the ground. Eric, fresh from the study of antiquities, showed himself so familiar with all the related topics, that Bella could not refrain from expressing her astonishment.

"You are a good teacher, and it must be a pleasure to be instructed by you." Eric thanked her, and Bella continued with friendly affability,—"Yes, indeed! many people give instruction in order to make a brilliant appearance, and many deal forth their knowledge reluctantly; but you, Doctor, teach like a beneficent friend who delights in being able to impart, but takes a yet greater pleasure in bestowing a benefit upon the recipient; and you impart in such a way that one is not only convinced you understand the matter, but believes that he himself does."

Clodwig looked up in amazement, for he had said the evening before precisely the same thing of Eric's father, while making mention of the fact that the only little

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treatise ever published by him had received the disinterested help of Professor Dournay.

Bella withdrew after having thus shown her friendliness and her admiring surprise. The two men sat together for a long time after this, and then went to Eric's room, where Eric handed to the count a copy of his Doctor's thesis; and it then first occurred to him how strangely it had happened that he had there discussed the apocryphal treatise of Plato, "Concerning Riches," and now he was to be called upon to educate one under conditions of wealth. Eric and Clodwig were greatly struck by this coincidence.

Clodwig requested Eric to translate the manuscript from Latin into German. He did so, and it was to them a time of real enjoyment.

When they arose, Clodwig observed to Eric how strange it must appear to him to find the Medusa and Victoria opposite each other; but he confessed to a heresy which met with his own approval, though not in accordance with the received scientific explanation. The Medusa was to him the expression of all-consuming passion, which stiffens with horror the sinning beholder who sees therein the image of himself; and it was very significant that the ancients represented this entire abandonment of all the higher spiritual nature through a womanly form, the unrestrained indulgence of passion being opposite to the truly feminine, and so the more unseemly. The Victoria of Rauch, on the other hand, appeared to him to be the embodiment of an eminently modern spiritual conception.

"This countenance is wonderfully like" —he did not finish the sentence, but, stammeringly beginning another, continued: "This is not that Goddess of Victory who wears proudly and loftily the crown upon her gleaming forehead; this is the representation of victory which is inwardly sad that there is a foe to be conquered. Yes, still further, this Victoria is to me the goddess of victory over self, which is always the grandest victory."

After Clodiwg had made this remark, he said, "Now I leave you to yourself; you have already talked too much to-day and yesterday." Eric remained alone, and while he was writing to his mother, Clodwig sat with Bella and said to her: —

"This young man is a genius, and ought not to live in a dependent situation, bound to routine service; he ought to be free like a bird, singing, flying, as he will, without any fixed and unalterable limits of time and occupation, and especially he ought to be by himself. It is a joy to meet with such originality and depth."

"Is he not too well aware of his own worth?" asked Bella, a flash of displeasure gleaming in her eyes.

"Not at all. He does not wish to shine, and yet he is genuine light. I feel as if I stood in the clear sunshine of the spirit; he is a man of pure character, and I am at home with him in the inmost realities, as I am with myself." Bella said nothing, and Clodwig continued: — "I like especially in him, that he lets one who is talking with him complete his sentence; he does not interrupt by any movement or any change of feature; and in such an active and richly endowed mind this is doubly valuable, and something more than mere civility."

Bella still kept silence, bent over her embroidery, on which she was diligently intent. At last she looked up, and with a beaming countenance, said, "I rejoice in your joy."

"And I should like to perpetuate this joy," Clodwig replied.

"He is a handsome man," added Bella.

Clodwig answered, smiling, "Now, since you have called my atention to it, I am reminded how handsome he is. But he does not plume himself upon his good looks, and I think *that* to be genuine beauty, which, when present has nothing strikingly prominent, all being in harmonious combination, but which, when thought of afterwards, reveals new and beautiful attributes and forms. Most handsome men are forever looking into a mirror visible only to themselves. But why should I give up this man to somebody else, and above all to this Sonnencamp? I am situated so that I can offer him a home with me for years! Why not do it?

"Why not?" said Bella, putting away her embroidery. "I need not assure you that I have no other joy in life than yours. So it is now with this brief happiness of yours, this childlike confidence you place in this noble-looking man. I see also that he has something elevated in his nature; he imparts much and gladly, is stimulating and quickening."

"Why not then?"

"Because we want to be alone! Clodwig, let us be by ourselves! It is my desire that even my brother should soon leave us; every third person, whether related by blood or by the most intimate spiritual ties, causes a separation, so that we do not have exclusive possession of each other."

While she was speaking, she had placed her hand on Clodwig's arm, and now she

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grasped his hand and stroked it. As Clodwig went away, Bella looked after him, shaking her head.

Bella came to the dinner-table handsomely dressed, and with a single rose in her hair. The men appeared weary, but she was extremely animated. She spoke a great deal of the happiness she had always had in being at the house of Eric's parents, where no ignoble word was ever uttered, for the mother cherished every high thought, like a priestess tending and feeding the smallest flame of the ideal on the household altar. Eric, who thought that he was proof against any further excitement, experienced a new and elevated emotion.

They drove out at noon, and Bella was silent during the ride. They visited a former Roman encampment. Bella sat alone under a tree, upon a covering spread upon the ground, and the men walked about.

When they came together around the evening lamp, Bella seemed like an entirely different person, having for the third time, that day, changed her dress. She was now very lively.

Bella had never been, during her whole life, dissatisfied with herself; she had never repented anything she had done, always saying, You were fully justified, at the moment when you acted. She did not wish at this time to appear in a false light to her husband's favorite, or as a mere trifling appendage; Eric should know who she was, that she was not only Clodwig's wife, but over and above all, Bella von Pranken.

She was ready to play as soon as Clodwig expressed the wish to hear her. The quick and eager haste with which she took off her ringing and rattling bracelets, which Eric at once with marked attentiveness received from her hand and placed upon the marble table under the mirror, — the manner in which she poised her hands like two fluttering pinions, and then brought them down upon the keys, like a swimmer who is in his element, — all served to show how resolved she was to occupy no second place. And never, since she had been Clodwig's wife, had Bella played as she now did in the presence of a third person, reserving hitherto her masterly performance on the piano for Clodwig alone. To-day her execution displayed such zest and skill that Clodwig himself, who knew every peculiar excellence in her method of playing, received a new surprise and delight.

During a pause, Eric seemed to strike the right key by remarking, that, after such elevated enjoyment in the intercourse with noble persons and in the wide survey of unbounded nature, there is nothing for the soul but to let the feelings dissolve and die away in the unlimited and shoreless ethereal atmosphere of music. A realm of waking dreams is then opened to us, a feeling of the infinite is awakened, that creates a something beyond what any word or look can express, and which is never unfolded by any sight or sound of nature from the unfathomed and mysterious depths of the human soul. As in answer to the inquiry, what influence predominated in him before composing, Mozart said, 'nothing but music which *would* come out,' — the pure musical impulse without any definite conception, without any limiting idea, only a rhythmic, billowy undulation of tones, — so it is that we, after the tension of thought and observation, through music are admitted into that pure, undefined, yet all-encompassing realm, which is a chaos, but a chaos that is no longer formless and void.

Bella, who sat reclining far back in a large arm-chair, gazed at Eric in such rapt wonder, that he dropt his eyes, unconsciously fixed upon her. To the surprise of both the men she suddenly rose, and bade them good night. She first gave her hand to Clodwig, then to Eric, and then to Clodwig again, and quickly went out.

Clodwig remained only a short time with his guest, and then he also took his leave. Eric went, in a sort of ecstacy, to his chamber. How rich was the world! what a day this had been from the dawn in the dewy wood even until this moment! and human happiness was a reality! Here were two who had attained rest and blessedness, such as could hardly be believed to exist in the actual world.

While he was standing still upon the carpeted stairs, from unconscious thoughts of the rich house he was about to enter, and conscious thoughts of the full and rounded existence of his host and hostess, the question suddenly occurred to him, Is this beautiful life, this perfecting of the soul in an extended view of nature, and its saturation in all that is beautiful in science and art, possible to wealth only, to freedom from care and want, to emancipation from all labor and from common needs?

As, holding the light in his hand, he entered the balcony chamber, he remained standing terrified, as if a ghost had appeared to him, before the bust of the Medusa, which with open mouth fixed upon him its overpowering and paralyzing gaze.

How is this? how has this image so suddenly assumed this likeness? Did Clodwig have any suspicion of it? It was indeed terrible.

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Eric turned about, and now, as if it were some trick played upon him by an evil spirit, the contrasted image also, the Victoria, has a likeness to Bella when, silent and quiet, she modestly and humbly bent down her head.

Had Clodwig any suspicion of this wonderful play of opposites, and did he not acknowledge this, this morning when he avowed his heresy to the received opinion?

The pulse in Eric's temples beat violently. He put out the light, looked for a long time out into the dark night, and sought to recall afresh to his recollection the bright plenitude of the day's experience.

CHAPTER XII.

FRAU ADVENTURE.

In the morning Eric put on his uniform, for so Clodwig had advised with cautious reference to a former experience. A horse had been placed at his disposal, and his portmanteau was to be sent after him.

Clodwig's contracted brow grew smooth as the handsome, noble-looking young man entered the parlor in his becoming uniform. After greeting him, he pointed to Eric's arm, saying: —

"Take off the crape before you go."

Eric looked at him surprised, and Clodwig explained himself.

"You are not to be sentimental, and you must agree with me that it is not well to enter, for the first time, a stranger's house, wearing a badge of mourning. People often desire a sympathy which they cannot expect to receive. You will be less disturbed in the end, if you impress it upon yourself at first that you are entering service, and moreover are to serve an extremely rich man, who would like to keep everything unpleasant out of sight. The more you keep to yourself your own personal feelings, the more free will you be."

Clodwig smiling quoted from Lucian's "Sale of the Philosophic Sects," where the Stoic as a slave cries out, "Even if I am sold, I am still free within myself!"

Eric good-humoredly took the crape from his sleeve.

Bella had excused herself from appearing at breakfast, and sent Eric a message of farewell till their next meeting.

The two men were now alone. Clodwig gave Eric a letter for Herr Sonnenkamp, but begged him not to make any positive engagement until he had seen him again, adding almost inaudibly, "Perhaps I shall keep you for myself."

As a mother crams all the pockets of her son going away from home, so Clodwig sought to give his young friend all sorts of instructions.

"I have but slight acquaintance with the boy," said he; "I only know that he is very handsome. Do you not agree with me that it is a great mistake to give a young soul the foundation principles which are to determine his life-course, before this young soul has collected the material of life or knows his own tendencies?"

"Certainly," replied Eric; "it is like building railroads in uncultivated or half-civilized countries, before roads have made possible the interchange of agricultural and manufactured products. The root of the disease of modern humanity, as my father often said, lies in the habit of teaching children dogmatically the laws which govern the universe; it is a superfluous labor based on ostentation, which is unfruitful, because it leaps over the first steps."

Clodwig nodded several times. This man might be trusted to sail out into the open sea; he would always have a compass with him.

The time of departure came; Clodwig said, —

"I will go a little way with you."

Eric took his horse by the bridle, and they walked on side by side. The old man often fixed an anxious, affectionate look upon his young friend. He repeated that he considered it a highly honorable task to train the young American for a useful life; then he advised him again to keep this one object in view, and to turn resolutely from all gossip concerning Herr Sonnenkamp, who had certainly left many rumors uncontradicted, either because he was too upright to trouble himself about them, or because he preferred to have some facts of his history hidden by false reports. It was undoubtedly singular, that though he was a German by birth, not a single relative had ever been seen at his house; probably, however, he was of low origin, and helped his relatives on condition that they should have no intercourse with him; Major Grassler had hinted at something of that kind.

"One thing more," said Clodwig, standing still, "say nothing to Herr Sonnenkamp of your having for a short time devoted yourself to the supervision of criminals. I would cast no slur upon him, but many men have an aversion to persons of such a calling."

Eric thanked him, seeing clearly his earnest desire to smooth the path before him. They went on in silence until Clodwig said, "Here I will turn back, and let me give you one warning."

"A warning?"

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"Perhaps that isn't the right word; I only want to say to you, make up your mind to pass in the world for an enthusiast. A man who seeks anything in life except profit, pleasure, and honor, appears an enthusiast to many people who have no sympathy with such a predilection; the world cannot be just to such men, it must condemn them, because it sees its own strivings condemned by them. You will have to bear a martyrdom all your life long, if you remain true, —and I believe you will; bear it with a proud self-respect, and remember that a new, old friend understands you, and lives your life with you."

Suddenly the old man laid his hands on Eric's shoulders, kissed him, and walked hastily away, without once turning.

Eric mounted and rode on; as he turned the corner of the wood, he looked back and saw Clodwig standing still. Bella had watched the pair from the balcony, which commanded a view of their whole course; now she went to meet her husband, and was not a little surprised to observe in his face an emotion which she had never seen there before; he seemed to have been weeping.

"You were right," said Clodwig hastily, "it is better for us to remain by ourselves. But I rejoice in this new generation which differs from ours; it wavers no longer between the two poles of enthusiasm and despair; it has, if I may so express it, a sort of intellectual inspiration, and I believe it will bring more to pass than we have. I am glad that I am not too old to understand these young people born into an age of railroads. I admire and love this present age; never before has every man in every calling known so definitely what he wishes and ought to do, both in science and practical life."

Bella thought she must make some reply, and said that young Sonnenkamp would be fortunate to have such a guide.

"It pains me that he must enter that house."

"Yet you have recommended him."

"Yes, that's it exactly. One is punished sooner or later for undertaking anything with half-sincerity or against his real convictions. I have brought myself into closer relations with this Herr Sonnenkamp, without really wishing it. In his house I always have a feeling as if I were in a family where horse-flesh is eaten. But, good heavens! it may be prejudice, custom; horse-flesh is also one kind of meat. But now I am free from anxiety for the excellent young man."

Clodwig seemed unable to cease talking of Eric; and as he recalled what had passed, he was astonished at all that he had learned from him in so short a time; pointing to an apple-tree in blossom, he exclaimed: "Look at that tree in bloom, which when shaken covers every one with blossoms, and yet its richness is unimpaired. Such is this Dournay."

Bella replied, that it must be a hard task for a man who was so spoken and thought of to live up to the standard expected of him.

"May not such pleasure in imparting," she asked doubtfully, "be an exaggerated self-esteem or pure vanity?"

"O no! this young man does not wish to make a show; he only wishes that no moment of existence may be utterly wasted. He lets his active spirit work, and he must take satisfaction in the notice and sympathy of others; without this satisfaction, the pleasure of imparting would be impossible. That is the faith which removes mountains of prejudice."

"Faith?" said Bella, smiling beforehand at her own nice distinction, "it seems to me rather like the permanent embalming of a want of faith." He very zealously endeavored to show how this was, rather, the difficult and painful transmission of one's life.

He spoke long and eagerly. Bella appeared to listen, but hardly heard what he said; she smiled to herself at the old diplomatist, who had something incomprehensibly child-like, almost childish, about him. She threw her head back proudly, conscious of her inflexible virtue, which was strongly armed even against her husband, who wished to bring her into constant intercourse with a young man so richly endowed.

In the mean time Eric had ridden on through the wood, filled with fresh animation by the happy chance which had befallen him. He took a firm hold of his horse's bridle, full of that confident spirit to which every undertaking seems sure of success, or, at least, of only short and temporary failure. He congratulated himself on the good fortune that had helped him to win so easily and entirely a man of refined character, who was evidently somewhat cautiously reserved towards most men.

He had left his past life on the mountain behind him, and a new one was beginning. Smiling, he thought, The heroes of old must have felt in my mood, when they knew that they were under the protection of one of the gods of Olympus.

At a turn in the wood he stopped, and, taking Clodwig's unsealed letter from his pocket, read as follows:

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"A neighbor's greeting to Herr Sonnenkamp, at Villa Eden.

"Had Fate granted me a son, I should consider it as a completion of the great blessing, to be able to give him this man as a tutor.

"CLODWIG, COUNT VON WOLFSGARTEN.
WOLFSGARTEN CASTLE, May 4, 186-."

Eric set spurs to his horse, and rode gaily on through the wood, where birds were singing amid the fresh young leaves. As he passed through the village, he saw at the window of the Rath-haus, behind blooming wall-flowers, a rosy, fair-haired maiden, who drew back quickly as he bowed to her. He would have liked to turn his head to see whether she was looking after him, but he did not venture to do so.

After a little while, it occurred to him that he was very vain to believe that this lingering behind the flowers concerned him at all; Lina had undoubtedly expected to see Baron von Pranken, when she heard his horse approaching.

Eric was now riding along the river-bank in the valley. He was so full of cheerfulness, that songs rose to his lips as they had not done for a long time; he did not give them voice, but sang them in his soul. The whole fulness and variety of thought, perception, and feeling were stirring in his heart. As he saw the sun shining on the glass dome of Villa Eden, it struck him like a lightning flash, —

Why is such a free, delightful existence denied me? why must I labor in the service of others? Then came the thought, But what should I do with such an indolent, selfish life? Then the riddle presented itself, How is one to educate a wealthy boy?

And so strangely are thoughts associated in the human mind that Eric felt, not that he could solve this riddle, but that he could understand how the ancients had represented the idea of enigmatical questioning and the riddle under the form of the Sphinx.

Then again came the inquiry, How can one educate a rich boy, who knows that an estate like that, and untold wealth, are to be his, and who sees no need for exertion in the life before him?

Eric had been looking down; now he threw back his head and smiled as he thought, Neither pupil nor tutor is a mere abstract idea; both are living, variously endowed beings. Such questions can receive no general answer, and all riddles are like stormy weather out of doors, that, seen through the dim atmosphere from the shelter of a house, seems intolerable, but once out in the midst of it, one feels refreshed.

All his puzzling doubts and speculations seemed cleared away, and he felt ready armed to wrestle with the problem. "Come on, riddle, I am ready for you," he said almost aloud, and rode on at a quick trot.

In the midst of his doubts and thoughts a pleasant smile suddenly spread over his face. He wondered whether he were not under some spell, and all the frolicsome humor of youth came over him as he uttered aloud a letter which he would write to his mother.

"DEAR MOTHER:

"You must let yourself be named Frau Adventure, for your son, Doctor Adventure, Captain Hero, in the midst of railway cars and telegraphs, has fallen upon Dream-land, where he is fed upon the sweet-bread of praise, and the sugared almonds of protection, by a pair of spirits who watch over the Holy Grail. He is now seated on a bay horse, and has the magic word sesame of a sage hermit in his pocket, and all things come at his bidding, and each says, "Heart, what dost thou desire?" Dear mother, if you want a quiet little island, only say so; I have innumerable ones to dispose of.

"And there's a postscript, dear mother. Suppose the millionaire, towards whom I am riding, should be Uncle Adam? That would make the fairy tale complete."

At the thought that this fanciful conjecture might be a probability, Eric stopped short. Then he rode briskly along the broad road, on each side of which grew great nut-trees, dropping their caterpillar-like blossoms on the path. The horse trotted on bravely, his black mane flying in the wind as the rider lifted his cap to let the fresh air cool his hot brow.

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BOOK II. — CHAPTER I.

A MORNING IN EDEN.

THE boats sail up and down the river, the railway trains move on this side and on that, and persons from all countries, and in every relation of life, get refreshment from the view.

There thou wouldst like to dwell, many a one thinks, and to pass away thy days in the regular and constant enjoyment of nature, and in voluntary labor, solitary, or in the society of congenial persons.

The banks of the Rhine have the appearance of being charming seats of repose, while they also furnish enough of stirring life. The high-road of intercourse with the world lies before the very threshold of the house; and from the midst of solitude, every hour can unite itself with the great world's varied and bustling activity.

Cheerful towns and villages along the banks, with their castles and vineyards, their beautiful and well-kept country-seats, are everywhere seen, forming an almost unbroken chain.

From town to town, and from house to house, stories are narrated of the narrow escapes of the inhabitants, who saved themselves with resolute strength from the ingulfing flood, or with the last energy of despair reached the shore, many being dashed with violence upon the bank.

He who comes an entire stranger from abroad, and makes his home here, can feel assured that it is at his option to cultivate an acquaintance with the old residents, or to remain by himself. The continual current of strangers, coming and going, allows him who remains to abide in complete isolation.

Whose is that beautiful country-house yonder, which looks to the passer-by, with its tower gleaming from a distance, like a white swan nestling in the green bank? Travellers on the boats passing up and down the river often ask this question, and receive the reply, that the villa is called Eden, and that it is a real Eden, as far as one can judge from the outside, for it is all shut up and guarded, with spring-guns and steel traps the whole length of the garden walls. The servants have permission to show the house and park only when the owner is away on a journey, and then they take in a great deal of money.

One praises the wonderful stables with marble mangers; another, the hot-houses all in bloom; a third, the beautiful arrangement of the interior of the house; a fourth, the fruit-garden and the park, each one according to his own peculiar taste. The owner is a rich American, who has built this house, laid out the shady park, and changed the half-swampy, ragged, and uneven meadow, extending down to the river, into a fruit-garden that bears fruits of a size and beauty never before seen in this region. He was rebuilding, too, the ruined castle there on the height.

And what is the name of this man?

Sonnenkamp. Almost all his servants are foreigners; he visits only a few persons in the vicinity, and seldom receives any one as a guest; no one knows, indeed, who he is, or what he is. He has the finest horses, but he, his wife, and a female companion drive and ride out together, only at some convenient point to turn back again on the public highway.

On the morning that Eric rode to the villa, a large, thick carpet was laid by servants in morning livery on the west side upon the extensive gravelled square. A round table with green damask covering was placed near a many-colored pyramid of fragrant flowers, and on the table was afterwards set a large, ground crystal vase, with artistically arranged flowers and bouquets, and plates for four persons.

A side-table was placed near a blossoming copse of laburnums and variegated lilacs, and on it a large silver tea-urn with lighted lamp. A thin vapor soon went up from the urn. Two great rocking-chairs were put in suitable places near by.

A young man who stood aside, taking no part in the arrangement, looked out upon the landscape, where one could enjoy a view extending over the fruit-garden and the fountain, in whose basin two pairs of swans were swimming, over the meadows; and now he turned away from the prospect, inspected the preparations, and with the words, "All right," withdrew with the servants. The tea-urn steamed, and the chairs and table seemed to be awaiting the company.

A pert finch alighted upon the back of one of the rocking-chairs, and whistled to his little mate in the trees: "that was a fine set-out, and he would like, if he could, to do the same for his little ones."

The forward, impudent young father was, however, soon scared away, for at the sound of approaching footsteps he started, and carelessly flew directly over the hissing urn, whose vapor seemed to scald him, and to change his course, so that he almost grazed the hat on the head of the man who now came in.

The man limped a little with his right leg,

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but he knew how to disguise it so that this limping toned down the formidable impression of his powerful, athletic frame.

He was a large, broad-shouldered man, in a well-fitted summer suit, and a white neck-cloth with a standing shirt-collar after the English fashion. The man of Herculean frame seemed to do all he could to reduce, lessen, and soften the effect of it; but the finest garments could do this only in a small degree. He wore a broad-brimmed straw hat, so that at a short distance but little could be seen of his shaded face. The young man who had superintended the arrangements a short time before, bearing a large portfolio, followed the strong man. The man in the straw hat had sat down in the rocking-chair, which, together with the portfolio, was made ready for him.

Removing the straw hat, which the valet Joseph at once took, he stroked his smoothly-shaven, prominent chin with his large, fleshy hand, on whose thumb, strange to say, was a ring like a single link of a chain, a golden hoop with iron in the middle.

The man is Herr Sonnenkamp. His reddish face had deeply marked lines, and over his broad brow a lock of gray hair was combed down. There was a more than ordinary breadth between the bristling eyebrows, giving to them the appearance of having been forcibly rent asunder. Whoever saw this countenance once could never forget it.

The deeply-set, light-blue eyes had an expression of determination and shrewdness; the shoulders were broad and somewhat round; the nose was large, but not without a character of nobleness; the mouth was somewhat curved with imperious disdain. The whole countenance was worn and anxious, but a domineering energy was visible in all its traits.

The impression at the first was, that one would not like to have this man for an enemy. "Hand here," he now said, taking out of his vest-pocket a ring on which were suspended some very small keys.

Joseph held the portfolio in the most convenient position for Sonnenkamp to unlock, and then took out the letters it contained. Sonnenkamp speedily arranged them, placing together those with a foreign stamp, and by the side of them a large pile having an inland postage mark. Joseph now laid down the hat and the portfolio upon the empty rocking-chair, and with his ready scissors cut every envelope.

Herr Sonnenkamp quickly ran over the opened letters, and put them aside. He only looked at the seal and address of some of the inland ones, and directed that they should be placed again in the portfolio; he put two of the foreign in his pocket, and, placing the rest back with his own hand, locked the portfolio.

The folding-doors of the terrace were opened, and Herr Sonnenkamp rose, taking from the chair his broad straw hat. Two female forms appeared on the terrace. One, tall, with a long, pale, sad face, wore a morning cap with deep-red ribbons, and a flaming red shawl; the other was a small, pretty figure, with sharp, bloodless features, piercing brown eyes, and coal-black hair lying flat upon the head; she was one of those countenances that have plainly never been youthful, and to which advancing age can do no harm. Her dress was of black silk, and she had suspended from her neck a mother-of-pearl cross that glistened and shone upon her breast.

Herr Sonnenkamp had that American trait, including in itself so much that is good, of respectful courteousness and considerate care toward his own household and relatives; he went to meet the two ladies at the steps, nodded pleasantly to the lady in black, and extending his hand to the lady in the red shawl, asked in a kindly tone after her health, using the English language.

The lady, Frau Ceres, did not deem it necessary to make any reply. She went to her seat at the breakfast table, and a female attendant immediately placed a shawl over her lap, and a waiter pushed under her feet a cushioned footstool.

The lady in black, Signora Boromea Perini, went to the side-table, and took with a spoon from the tea-canister, which a servant held, the requisite measure of tea.

"Where is Roland?" inquired Frau Ceres, in a listless tone.

"He will soon be here," answered Sonnenkamp, and made a sign to have him sent for. Fräulein Perini brought the first cup to Frau Sonnenkamp, to whom it appeared too great an exertion to pour in a couple of drops of milk. In a very subdued tone, Herr Sonnenkamp asked, "Will you eat anything, dear child?"

Frau Ceres sipped a spoonful, then half a one, and looked about, as if spent with the effort. It seemed to be a burden to her to be obliged to sip the tea herself.

"Where is Roland?" she inquired again. "It is inexcusable that he is so irregular. Did you not say something, Madame Perini?"

"Nothing, my gracious lady."

Herr Sonnenkamp remarked in a very mild, pacifying tone, if she would endure it patiently a little longer, Roland would re-

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ceive, it was to be hoped, a tutor at last who would bring him under the proper discipline. He then spoke of the letter which Otto von Pranken had written to him. At the mention of this name, Fräulein Perini let a biscuit fall into her cup, and busied herself in fishing it out again, while Sonnenkamp added that he should read no more applications, until he had become acquainted with the person recommended by Herr von Pranken.

"Is the man one of the nobility?" asked Frau Ceres.

"I do not know," replied Sonnenkamp, though he did know very well; "he is a captain."

Frau Ceres, without saying anything, determined within herself to wait until this question of nobility was settled.

Fräulein Perini, feeling that she must speak for Frau Ceres as if knowing what she thought, looked at her smilingly and observed, "One seldom meets with so perfect a chevalier as the Baron von Pranken, at least not in Germany; even more than the countess Bella he has ——"

"I pray you," Herr Sonnenkamp here interposed, and his countenance had the expression of a bull-dog trying to be tender, "I pray you not to praise others at the expense of the countess; the ladies are bewitched with Herr von Pranken, and for my part, I am with the countess Bella."

Frau Ceres gave an almost imperceptible shrug of the shoulders, and held the gold spoon pressed to her lips. He boasts of being fascinated, she rightly thought, and it is only for the sake of making a complimentary speech.

"But where can Roland be?" she suddenly exclaimed, and pushed against the footstool so that the table shook, and everything upon it rattled.

The servant, entering, said that Roland would not come to breakfast, as he did not wish to eat anything to-day, but to remain with Nora, who had five puppies.

"Then tell him," rejoined Sonnenkamp, and his countenance flushed a dark red even to the roots of his thin hair, — "then tell him that if he does not instantly come, I will have all the five young ones immediately drowned in the Rhine."

The servant hastened out, and a beautiful youth, clothed in blue velvet, soon made his appearance; he was pale, and his finely cut lip quivered. He had evidently gone through a hard struggle.

The boy was tall and slender, and his features were strikingly beautiful, delicately regular as if chiselled. He took off his jockey-cap, and showed his dark brown hair, well arranged in thick curls about his forehead.

"Come to me," said his mother, "and kiss me, Roland, you look so pale; is anything the matter with you?"

The boy kissed his mother, and, shaking his head as if denying that anything ailed him, said in a voice hovering between a falsetto and a bass, "I am as well as my young dogs."

A deep color dyed his cheeks, and his lips became purple.

"I do not wish to punish you on the day that you receive your tutor," said Sonnenkamp, casting a glance toward his wife.

"I? a tutor again? no tutor for me," replied the boy; "and if you give me one, I will soon make him take his leave."

Sonnenkamp smiled. This bold, defiant attitude of the boy seemed specially to delight him. When Roland, who had just declined all food, ate now heartily, his mother followed his example; in the satisfaction of knowing that her son had so good an appetite, she also found one, so that Fräulein Perini could not refrain from remarking to Roland,—

"See, Master Roland, how on your dear mother's account you should come regularly at meal-time, for she can only taste food when you also partake of it."

The boy gave Fräulein Perini a peculiar look, but made no reply; there seemed to be no good understanding between the boy and the companion of his mother. Fräulein Perini, however, showed her friendliness toward the boy, promising to pay a visit with him to the young dogs after breakfast.

"Do you know why dogs are born blind?" asked Roland.

"Because God has so ordained it."

"But why has God ordained it?"

Fräulein Perini looked puzzled at this question, and Herr Sonnenkamp came to her help, saying that he who was continually asking the reason why would never accomplish anything, and that Roland had fallen into this way of constant questioning, because he was not willing to learn anything thoroughly.

The boy looked down. A certain sullenness or dulness, perhaps both, appeared in the expression of his face.

Frau Ceres left the breakfast table, seated herself in a rocking-chair, and contemplated her long, delicate, almond-shaped nails.

Herr Sonnenkamp told her what a number of letters in German, French, and English he had received in answer to his ad-

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vertisement; the candidates had generally enclosed their photographs, and rightly, for personal appearance was significant.

Frau Ceres listened like one who is sleepy, sometimes closing her eyes. When Sonnenkamp remarked how much misery there was in the world, a constant looking for a perfect success, to which every man believes that money is the one thing needful, she threw upon him a sidelong glance of surprise, apparently not comprehending how any one could live, and be destitute of means.

Fräulein Perini, the companion, was a useful mediator; she knew how, while Frau Ceres remained apparently or really quite inattentive, to keep up the conversation with short questions, or remarks, as she occasionally looked up from her embroidery and cast a glance, the real convent glance, shy but benignant, upon Herr Sonnenkamp. In this way Frau Ceres could listen, without exerting herself to join in the conversation.

Fräulein Perini seemed to serve Herr Sonnenkamp as a person upon whom he could practice politeness; and they stood in the most courteous relation to each other. He would, in fact, have been glad to dismiss her long before, but she was fastened upon him like the rheumatism-ring which he wore on his left thumb.

Frau Ceres was always carefully waited upon by Fräulein Perini; never alone, she had a constant companion and attendant, and when they drove out, Herr Sonnenkamp always left the seat next his wife to Fräulein Perini, riding backwards himself. He could not be rid of her, and it was best to treat her with polite consideration. Besides, she had many excellent qualities, and best of all, no whims; she was always even-tempered, never put herself forward, and always had an opinion, which generally was one that caused no discussion. She never appeared offended; if she was overlooked, she seemed not to notice it; or if drawn into conversation, she was agreeable, and even witty; she was always ready to help, to do for and to meet others, and never talked of herself.

Every morning, summer and winter, she went to church, and was always in order, as if ready for a journey at an hour's notice; she knew where everything was in the house, and was never in the way in travelling. She was always busy with embroidery, and there was no church for miles around which had not an altar-cloth, or some part of the decoration, of her work.

She spoke all the continental languages with ease, except German, which she said she never could learn. Sonnenkamp was convinced, however, that she understood it perfectly, and that her want of comprehension was only a mask whose object it was easy to see.

Her relations with Roland were peculiarly distant. She treated him as the young master of the house, but concerned herself no further about him, even declining his father's proposal that she should instruct him in the languages. She never stepped out of the circle that appeared marked out for her; after being Manna's governess, she became wholly and exclusively the companion of Frau Ceres; and this was a most safe and honorable position.

The more Herr Sonnenkamp spoke of the recommendation of Herr von Pranken, so much the more attentive Fräulein Perini seemed to become, but she did not utter a single word; but when Herr Sonnenkamp asked her what had been her feelings when she was first introduced to the family at Nice, she answered, "I had the happiness to be introduced to you by my noble guardian, the Dean."

Roland was impatient and beckoned to Fräulein Perini to go with him; but Sonnenkamp requested her to remain with the mother, and in order to manifest some sympathy in his son's joy, he himself accompanied him.

Roland was the only one whom the dog allowed to come near her; and when Herr Sonnenkamp ventured it, she growled, and snapped at him with her teeth. He was very angry, but he restrained himself and went away.

Roland brought his cross-bow and shot at the doves and sparrows in the courtyard. Suddenly the boy left off. A horseman, with horse well in hand, galloped up to the gate.

CHAPTER II.

THE ARROW CAUGHT.

"SHOOT away, my boy, I'll catch the arrow!" the rider called from his horse, and the boy stood still, as if he had seen a miracle. Eric had heard much of Roland's beauty, but he was astonished at the charming grace of his figure. The boy's whole being seemed strained with amazement and excitement, like the bow which he held bent in his hand. The rider feasted his eyes on the picture. Roland's head was bare, his jockey-cap lay near him on a great dog resting at his feet, and just raising his head as if to ask whether he should start up and drive the stranger away.

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"Shoot away! Fire!" cried the rider, in a commanding tone. "Have you no courage?"

The arrow whizzed from the bow, the rider bent sideways and caught it with a sure hand.

"Either you are a bad marksman, or you tried not to hit me!" he exclaimed.

Astounded and motionless, with his bow lowered, the boy gazed at him while he was approaching and dismounting, and then asked, —

"Can you be the hero Siegfried?"

"Ah! then you know about him," replied Eric, gaily. "No, my young friend." He offered his hand to Roland, who seized it.

"Hero Siegfried wore no uniform with a red collar. But now help me to dispose of my horse."

"It is like one of Count Wolfsgarten's horses."

"It is his."

"Ivan!" shouted the boy.

A groom appeared and led the horse to the stable. As Eric and Roland followed, they heard from behind a partition near by a whining, and a weak attempt at barking.

"You have some young St. Bernard dogs close by," said Eric.

"Yes; do you know them by their whimper?"

"I can't tell the particular breed in that way. I saw a St. Bernard dog out there in the court; but I know by the sound that these puppies are blind and not a week old."

The boy looked at Eric as if he were a magician; he opened a door, but begged him to go no nearer, because the mother was very savage, and was just then suckling all the five young ones. Eric did approach her, however, and she looked at him without growling, and again the boy gazed at the stranger in astonishment.

"*You* can certainly tell me why dogs are born blind," he began.

Eric smiled. A boy who asks questions is desirous of instruction and ready for it; it is only necessary to put things before him which will lead him to question.

"Not only dogs," replied Eric, "but cats, eagles, and hawks come into the world blind. It may be that those animals which need sharp eyes for their support and protection have a gradual development of the power of sight, so that they do not see the light, as the saying is, all at once. Man even, though he opens his eyes at his birth, has no real power of sight at first; he has to learn to see during his first year. Man, like the brute, learns to use his limbs in his earliest years, but one thing the brute wants, he can never acquire articulate speech."

A thrill passed over the boy as he listened to the stranger, whose words again had a tone of strangely magnetic power. In the excited state in which Eric had been for two days, and which reached its height at this moment, it seemed to him as if he were acting out a fairy tale, or one of those dreams in which one says to himself, in the wonder of the dream-life, "Wake up, you are certainly dreaming!" There was something which gave him a sense of being merely a spectator of his own life, though he knew that he was actually living it. He compelled himself to collect his thoughts, and said at last, —

"You are the son of Herr Sonnenkamp, are you not? and your name is Roland?"

"Roland Franklin Sonnenkamp; what is yours?"

"Eric Dournay."

The boy started; he thought he had heard the name within a few days, but was not quite sure.

"You are a Captain of Artillery, sir?" said he, pointing to the uniform.

"I have been. Then you know the different uniforms, my boy."

"Yes; but Herr von Pranken doesn't speak to me so familiarly."

"I think we had better both keep up the familiar manner that we began with," answered Eric, holding out his hand to the boy. Roland's hand was cold, all his blood had rushed to his head. The boy was surprised and taken captive in spite of himself.

"If you like," he began again, "you can have one of my puppies. Two I mean to keep; one I shall bring up for my sister Manna; Baron von Pranken is to have the fourth, and you may have the fifth."

His face beaming with satisfaction, Eric looked at the boy; this pleasure in giving showed that there was something good to build upon.

"Perhaps you know that in Homer the host does honor to a guest by bestowing some gift as a token of remembrance."

"I know nothing about Homer."

"Have none of your tutors told you anything of him?"

"All of them. They made a great talk about him, but it's stupid."

Eric led the conversation back, and asked, "Who helps you train the dogs?"

"One who knows all about it, the huntsman Klaus, whom they call the screamer; he will be pleased when I tell him that you knew how old the puppies were by their whimper."

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Eric nodded. A boy like this might easily be guided to knowledge, if one could once get the lead.

Eric now asked Roland to conduct him to his father. As they were about to leave the stable, a snow-white pony with long mane turned his head quite round and neighed.

"That is my Puck," said Roland. He was ovidently very happy in showing the stranger all his treasures, almost like a little child who displays a toy for the wonder of his playmate. Eric could not but praise the beautiful creature, which looked at him with great, wild, shy eyes.

He took the boy's hand, and they went together through the large botanical garden.

"Do you know about plants too?" asked Roland.

"No, I'm quite ignorant about them."

"So am I," said the boy, delighted; Eric's acknowledgment of an ignorance which coincided with his own seemed to bring them nearer to each other.

They passed over a plat where men were weeding and putting the ground in order. A little old man, with a shy but shrewd look, was at work; he took off his cap, and said good-morning. "Have you seen my father?" asked Roland. "He is over there," replied the little man, pointing toward the green-houses.

The long green-houses, constructed of pale-blue glass, came in sight. A door stood open, within which a fountain was to be seen, in whose gray marble basin lay blocks of stone with water plants growing in all their crevices. Some of the trees which needed protection from the winter were still here, and a few which did not thrive had thick wrappings on trunk and branches.

They heard a voice. "There he is in the cold-house," said Roland. Eric told him to turn back now, as he had something to say to his father alone.

The boy stood as if rooted to the spot. In Eric's manner of ordering him to go, there was an air of such irresistible authority that he did not know what to make of it.

As Eric went forward, the boy stood motionless, then turned, snapped his fingers, and whistled to himself.

Drawing a long breath, Eric stopped a moment to collect himself. What if this boy were related to him by blood, and he were to find here his missing uncle? Walking slowly and composedly, he entered the open door of the green-house.

CHAPTER III.

THE FLAG IS HOISTED.

"WHO's there? what do you want?" was asked by a form as it raised itself up from a bed of black earth. A coarse, gray, sacklike linen garment covered the form from head to foot; it was like that worn by convicts, or rather, by the insane.

"What do you want? who are you? whom do you wish to see?" the man again asked.

"I wish to see Herr Sonnenkamp."

"What do you want of him?"

"I would like to introduce myself to him."

"I am he. Who are you?"

"My name is Eric Dournay. Herr von Pranken had the kindness, day before yesterday, to —"

"Ah! are you the man?" Sonnenkamp replied, drawing a long breath. With trembling hands he unfastened the linen sack which he wore over his coat, saying, with a forced smile, "You have surprised me in my working-garb."

Rolling the sack together, and tossing it away, he said, "Was no servant at hand? Do you always wear a uniform?"

It was the uniform then that gave him such a start, thought Eric. And, on looking at the man, he was sure that he could not be his uncle. The likeness of his missing uncle, which still hung in his father's study, was present to his mind; it represented him as a slim, delicate form, with a very prominent aquiline nose, and no trace of resemblance to this athletic personage before his eyes.

"I am very sorry for having disturbed you," Eric resumed, convinced that the first impression had been an unfavorable one. "I beg you indeed to excuse me," he stammered out; "the Count von Wolfsgarten, whose guest I have been, and from whom I bring to you a letter of recommendation, has —"

"A letter from Count Wolfsgarten? Very welcome. I am very glad to see you," replied Sonnenkamp, taking the letter.

"We have met very unexpectedly — there was no reason for suspecting — prejudice as men — I mean — constraint —"

Sonnenkamp's tone had wholly changed; it had become gentle, kind, almost tenderly beseeching.

He hastily ran his eye over the lines written by Clodwig, and then said in a low tone, —

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"I am very glad, — very welcome."

Looking up from the letter, he made a sort of bow to Eric, and, as if sure of acquiescence, remarked, "a nobleman — just what a nobleman ought to be—is the Count Wolfsgarten. Do you stand as high in favor with the Countess Bella?"

There was a touch of sarcasm in the tone of this last question.

Eric answered with an unmoved tone and look, "I am happy to enjoy equally the favor of husband and wife."

"Fine, very fine," Sonnenkamp resumed. "But let us go out into the open air. Are you a botanist too?"

Eric regretted that he had always neglected to extend his knowledge in this direction.

Out in the open air, Sonnenkamp again surveyed the new-comer from head to foot. Eric now for the first time noticed, that wholly forgetting his military attire, he had taken off his cap. And when he perceived the look with which he was surveyed, he realised what was the meaning of private service, to give up one's self with his whole personal being to the dominion of an individual.

In Sonnenkamp's survey there was something which made Eric feel as if he were in a slave-market; and when Sonnenkamp stretched out his hand with a peculiar gesture, it seemed as if he were about to take hold of his chin, open his lips, and examine whether his teeth were all sound.

Eric shook his head at this strange fancy, and proudly stood erect, feeling that he must maintain his own ground steadily in the presence of this man.

Sonnenkamp immediately gave orders to a servant near by to get breakfast ready at the fountain.

"Did you come on horseback?" he asked.

"Count Wolfsgarten was kind enough to furnish me with a horse."

"You have already spoken with my son?"

"Yes."

"I am glad that you came in uniform," Sonnenkamp said, making no further inquiries of Eric what he thought of the boy.

As if Eric were only a distinguished, well-recommended visitor, Sonnenkamp now exhibited to him the object of his greatest pride. This was a perfect collection of heaths, such as is rarely to be found. He discoursed upon the nice distinctions in the different varieties, and added: "I have been where the greater part of these heaths originated, the table-land of the Cape of Good Hope."

"I am sorry," said Eric, "that my mother is not here, for she would take great delight in this magnificent display."

"Is your mother a botanist?"

"Our botanical professor used to boast of her proficiency; but she takes great pains to avoid every appearance of being a blue-stocking. It must be very difficult to keep together these productions of different climates."

"Very difficult indeed. These Ericas require, at the same time, a regular temperature and a uniform moisture. You may often have noticed how some little heath-plant with its delicate blooms, which is sent to a lady for a flower-stand, becomes dry and brittle after a few days. This little plant will not endure the dry atmosphere of a room."

Sonnenkamp suddenly stopped, and smiled to himself. This stranger professed only an ordinary degree of knowledge in order to be agreeable, and to let the rich proprietor branch out and be eloquent about his darling hobby. I can't be taken by such coarse bait, thought Sonnenkamp. "Will you be so good as to put this tub from the stand upon the ground?" he said, pointing to a very large Erica.

A momentary glance made Sonnenkamp aware that Eric understood well enough that the motive was to find out whether he knew how to make himself serviceable, and how to keep a humble position.

Eric complied very readily with the request, but Sonnenkamp had immediately made up his mind, in spite of Clodwig's warm recommendation, not to receive this man into his house.

He had two reasons. The stranger had seen him, as no other person could ever boast, utterly thrown off his balance, and must therefore be removed from his sight; now it appeared that he must maintain a respectful demeanor, which was rather irksome.

He would, in the meanwhile, show to one so well-recommended every respectful attention. He took pleasure in thinking how he would test the man in all points, allow him to unfold himself in the consciousness of a certainty of being employed, and then dismiss him without assigning any reason for doing so.

All this passed through Sonnenkamp's thoughts while he was turning round to lock the green-house door. The thing was as surely and as firmly fixed in his mind as the door was surely and firmly locked.

"Do you speak English?" he asked, seeing his wife still sitting in the rocking-chair;

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she had taken off the red shawl, and as she sat there, her satin dress had a rich golden lustre.

"Captain, Doctor, I beg your pardon, what name?" said Sonnenkamp, in introducing him.

"Dournay."

Frau Ceres gave a hardly perceptible nod, and, as if there were no one else present, said in a peevish tone to her husband, that he paid no attention to her, and had not said a single word to her about her new dress. Sonnenkamp stood wholly at a loss to know what was the meaning of this unexpected sally of his wife. Did she think it was a mark of high-breeding to show the stranger such a degree of indifference? She was not diplomatic enough for that. He turned, and as if apologising, remarked to Eric that his wife loved gay colors.

In a tone of strict truth, Eric replied that he entirely coincided with the gracious lady; that gay colors were in keeping with external nature; and that people ought to be sunny and bright like the flowers.

Frau Ceres smiled at this friendly turn, and Eric continued in the same strain, that it was a lamentable effect of the style of conversation employed in society, that the expression even of a truth should be regarded as mere civility and flattery, whenever it struck pleasantly upon the ear; that words were deprived of their real meaning, and people accustomed themselves to advance ideas which neither the speaker nor the hearer actually believed; that our manner of talking in society was like a card of invitation to an evening party, in which eight o'clock was specified as the hour, when half past nine was meant; and he who went at eight only brought the hosts into a dilemma.

Frau Ceres looked from Eric to her husband, and from her husband to Eric, and as no one said anything, Eric continued, briefly pointing out how colors in dress harmonised with the natural environment. But he soon perceived that he was going too far in this exposition, and he added that the attire of ladies approached nearer to the ethereal bright plumage of the birds.

His mother now beckoned to Roland, who appeared in the distance. He pointed to the summit of the tower. The mother looked up and smiled; and the father also smiled when he saw the flag of the American Union floating from its top.

"Who did that?" asked Sonnenkamp.

"I," Roland answered, with a joyous smile.

"What is it for?"

The boy's visage changed, and he cast a side-glance toward Eric.

Sonnenkamp screwed his under lip between his thumb and fore-finger into a half-circle, and nodded silently.

Eric had noticed the boy's glance, and his heart beat for joy. He asked the boy,

"Are you very proud of being an American?"

"Yes."

Eric was introduced to Fräulein Perini as she came up to them; grasping the mother-of-pearl cross with her left hand, she made a very ceremonious courtesy. Frau Ceres requested her to go with her to the house. Sonnenkamp, Eric, and Roland remained by themselves.

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CHAPTER IV.

THE BUYER EXAMINES WHAT IS OFFERED.

"GIVE me your hand, Roland," said Eric. The boy gave it, looking up trustingly and joyfully.

"My young friend," Eric added, "I thank you for that testimony of respect waving yonder; but now leave us, for your father wishes to speak with me."

Father and son looked in amazement at the man who was giving his orders in such a free and easy manner. The boy departed, Eric nodding to him again.

After the two men were left by themselves, for a while no word was spoken. Herr Sonnenkamp, who always carried his cigars loose in his pocket, offered Eric a large, black, broken one, which he accepted and lighted from the match Sonnenkamp held out to him, without taking it into his own hand.

After drawing a few whiffs, he said, — "You will certainly agree with me, that it is an impolite politeness for any one to insist on taking the lighted match into his own hand; between this giving and taking, one generally burns his fingers."

However insignificant this remark, it served for a beginning. Herr Sonnenkamp leaned back in his chair, held the cigar-smoke for a long time in his mouth, and then blew it out in perfect rings, which, as they floated in the air, grew larger and larger until they vanished.

"You have great influence over the boy," he said, after a while.

"I think that the attraction is mutual, and this makes me hope that I might succeed as the boy's tutor. Only love can educate, as love only can create and form. An artist who does not love his calling can never truly create. There are, indeed, many who love a child because they give him instruction; but I can instruct only one whom I love."

"Fine, very fine, — noble. But Roland needs a strict hand."

"Love does not exclude but rather includes strictness; he who loves requires perfection in himself, as well as in the object of his love, and makes the highest demands."

Sonnenkamp nodded in a very friendly, even kindly manner; but there was a sort of sneer upon his countenance, as looking down to the ground and placing both hands upon his knees, he said: —

"We will speak now about personal matters; for things of that sort we will find time by and by. You are a ——?"

"Philologist by profession; but I have devoted myself, by preference, to practical education."

"I know that, — I know that," Sonnenkamp said, still looking down as he spoke.

"I should like to know something about your personal history."

He did not look up, and Eric was deeply pained at the thought of being obliged again to become his own biographer. He felt like a man who speaks to a sober and cool listener after drinking with a set of boon companions. He had unfolded himself freely and spontaneously to Clodwig, the day before; and to-day he must do it in order to recommend himself to a purchaser. And so it is! The seller must always say more, and expatiate more upon his goods, than the buyer. Wealth was a tyrannical power exhibiting itself under an entirely new form.

Eric, looking at the back of the man's head, and at his broad neck, — for not a glance was vouchsafed him, — very soon lost all sensitiveness as to his position of being a seeker after employment. He was not the receiver, but the giver. A tone of self-respect breathed in the words which he now uttered: —

"I offer you my free labor."

On hearing this, Sonnenkamp threw up his head quickly without changing his position, cast a rapid glance upon the speaker, and let his head immediately drop again.

"I mean," continued Eric, "that I offer to you and to your son all that I am, and all the knowledge and science that I have made my own hitherto. I look for no other reward than the free unfolding of my own activity; and I have the feeling of freedom in doing this, since whatever I may accomplish I accomplish also for myself, in bringing that actually to pass which I have striven after, and which I have laid down as a theoretical demand."

"I know what free labor is," Sonnenkamp said, looking towards the ground. Then sitting upright, he added with a smiling countenance: —

"You are not dealing with a man of learning. I think we shall come sooner to terms, if you will regard me as a common-sense man who only wants to know the plain matter-of-fact."

"I had hoped," Eric replied, "that the introduction of Count von Wolfsgarten — "

"I esteem highly the Count von Wolfsgarten, more highly than I do any one else; but — "

"You are right; I will give you a personal explanation," Eric interrupted.

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Was it the cigar, or was it the painful position in which he felt himself placed, that caused the sweat to start out upon Eric's forehead? At any rate, he laid the cigar down, and perceiving with a sort of surprise that he was wearing his uniform, began to explain again that he had put it on, for that day, because Count Wolfsgarten had advised him to do so.

Sonnenkamp again sat up wholly erect, feeling himself completely fortified against this man, who, an entire stranger, had taken possession of his house, his wife, his son, and thought even to domineer over him, and make him a stranger in his own home. He would let the applicant talk till he was tired.

"Go on, captain," he exclaimed, laying his right hand with the fingers crooked upon the table, and then drawing it back again, as if he had deposited a stake at play.

Eric had now become master of all his powers, and in a tone of cheerful good humor, began in a wholly different style: —

"Excuse a scholar for not throwing off his scholastic method. In the old poems, before the hero enters upon his career, the parents are described; and although I am no hero, and what I have to unfold is no record of personal prowess, yet allow me to give a preliminary account of my father and mother."

Eric once more gave a brief and concise sketch of his life. Mindful of Clodwig's advice not to say anything about his fancied mission to educate convicts, an incident occurred to him, which he had, in an incomprehensible way, wholly passed over before. He gave an account of his once having had charge of a powder-mill. "I was driven away by a revolting expression of my employer. From some cause never yet explained, the mill blew up, and four men were killed. But what said my employer when he reached the spot? Not one word of pity for the lost men, but 'that it was a shame for so much good powder to be lost.'"

"What was the man's name?" asked Sonnenkamp.

Eric gave one of the most distinguished names of the principality, and was not a little surprised to hear Sonnenkamp say, "A wonderful man, — influential and powerful."

Eric found it difficult to continue his narrative with composure after this incident, and ended by saying, —

"I beg that you will not regard me as a weak, restless person, for having so often changed my calling."

"On the contrary," Sonnenkamp declared, "I have had experience enough both in the old and new world, to teach me that the most capable people are just those who determine for themselves upon their employment. Whoever changes his calling must do so either from some external necessity, or from real fitness for something else. Allow me to ask one question. Do you believe it possible for a man who undertakes, compelled by want or because he can find nothing better to do, some employment, I do not like to call it a service, but a dependent position — you know what I mean, but I am not familiar with the German — is it possible for him to devote himself heartily to that occupation? Will he not always feel himself bound, under obligation to serve, and often ill at ease?"

"Your frank objection," Eric replied, "does me great honor. I know well that the calling of an educator requires to be made supreme, from morning until night. Nothing can be more desirable to me than to perceive that you are as deeply interested in the matter as I could wish."

Again a peculiar expression darted across Sonnenkamp's countenance; but Eric, without appearing to perceive it, continued, in a voice full of emotion, "It is not because I can find nothing better to do that I apply for the position of tutor in your family. I agree with you, that he who takes such a place merely from necessity can never fulfil its duties, although I do not mean to assert, and unconditionally, that inclination may not be developed, or as we say, that one may not make a virtue out of necessity. My knowledge is not great, but I have learned what one must do in order to learn, and therefore I think that I am able also to instruct. As far as earnest sincerity of purpose is concerned, I will yield to no one; and so far as I can judge, I venture to say, that were I placed in the most favorable circumstances, I would enter upon the calling of an educator in a spirit of freedom, with joyful zeal."

"Right honorable, right honorable! go on!" Sonnenkamp interposed in such a tone that Eric was somewhat confounded, hearing as he yet did, in a measure, the echo of his own earnest utterance, now so strangely interrupted. In a sort of triumphant tone, Sonnenkamp continued: —

"An amateur is all very well; but I prefer a man with a profession."

"I am entirely of the same opinion," Eric answered; "and I am amazed at the good results practically secured in the new world, by adopting a different course."

With constrained calmness he continued, —

"In regard to this matter, I have only one desire, and only one request to make."

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"And that is?"

Sonnenkamp again placed his hand upon the table as if he were laying down a stake at play.

"I should like that you would not find it disagreeable to consider me at first, for some days, a guest in your house."

Eric said nothing more, hoping that Sonnenkamp would answer at once in the affirmative; but he cracked in two, abruptly, a cigar which he had just lighted, and which did not seem to draw freely, and threw it away into the shrubbery. His face became red again, and a mocking smile played upon his lips, as he thought: "Very confident indeed! This young man imagines that if he can only get a lodgment for a few days, he can so bewitch every one that he will be deemed indispensable. We shall see!"

As he maintained a persistent silence, Eric said: —

"It would be desirable as well for you as for me, before making a permanent agreement, to know more of each other; and I especially desire this on Roland's account."

Sonnenkamp smiled, and watched two butterflies chasing each other, hardly giving any attention to Eric as he went on to state, that the boy seemed to him in one respect too mature, and in another not mature enough to be made acquainted with the selection of a tutor, and perhaps to have a voice in it; therefore he must first know him as a guest in the house, and afterwards as his tutor; also it was his own desire that Roland should not know that his tutor received pay in money, or at least, should not know the amount.

At the word money, Sonnenkamp seemed to come out of his butterfly-gazing.

"What sum would you demand?" asked he, putting into his mouth a fresh cigar that he had held for some time in his hand. Eric replied that it was not for him, but for the father, to determine that.

Sonnenkamp brought his cigar to a glow with a few violent whiffs, and with great unction declared how well he knew that no sum was large enough to compensate adequately the painstaking duties of education and instruction.

Then leaning back in his chair, crossing his legs, and holding on to his left leg with the right hand, manifestly well satisfied with this declaration of his noble sentiments, he said, —

"Would you be willing to give me an exposition in a few words of the principles and method you must employ in the training of my son?"

"The method to be marked out in any particular case, the course I should adopt in actual instruction, I myself do not as yet know."

"What! you yourself not even know that?"

"I must take my method from Roland himself, for it must be adapted to the pupil's natural characteristics. Let me take an illustration from your own surroundings. You see here the river. The boatmen have sounded the bottom, and knowing where the shoal-banks are, keep well clear of them. So must I, first of all, fathom, in the peculiar sense of that word, the depths of Roland's nature."

Eric looking up continued: —

"Or let me take a yet more pertinent illustration. If you see that your servants, in going from the house to the servants' quarters, take by preference a short cut over a grass-plot artistically measured and laid out, you will, if it is possible, give in to this beaten track, and not obstinately adhere to your artificial plan, however correct it may be, and however much in conformity with the principles of landscape-gardening. You will adopt this natural foot-path as a part of your plan. This is the method adapted to circumstances. Such thoroughfares are found also in human beings."

Sonnenkamp smiled; he had, in fact, tried very hard, by means of stringent prohibitions, to keep a bed of shrubbery in the middle of the court-yard free from foot-passengers, and finally had laid out a pathway through it.

"Agreed as to the method, but how about the principles?" He smiled with self-satisfaction, for he perceived how nice a distinction he had drawn. The man had made him conscious that, in an intellectual struggle, he had here no mean antagonist.

"Here I must take a wider range," resumed Eric. "The great contest, which runs through the history of humanity and the whole of human life, shows itself in the most direct way in the training of one human being by another; for here the two elementary forces confront each other as living personalities. I may briefly designate them as individuality and authority, or historic civilization and nature."

"I understand — I understand, go on!" was thrown in encouragingly by Sonnenkamp, when Eric paused for a moment, anxious not to get lost in generalities.

"The educator is necessarily the representative of authority, and the pupil is a personality by the very endowment of nature," resumed Eric. "There is continually then a balance to be adjusted between the two, a treaty of peace to be made between the contending forces, which shall at last

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become a real reconciliation. To train one merely as an individual is to place a child of humanity outside of actual existence, and for the sake of freedom to isolate him from the common life, and make it burdensome to him; to subject him merely to prescribed laws is to rob him of his inborn rights. The human being is a law to himself, but he is also born into a system of laws. It was the great mistake of Jean Jacques Rousseau, and the French Revolution, that in their indignation at the traditions contradictory to reason, they thought that an individual and an age could develop everything from themselves. A child of humanity neither contains all within himself, nor can he receive all from without. I think then that there is a mingling of the two elements, and there must be an hourly and an imperceptible influence exerted both from within and from without equally, inasmuch as man is a product of nature and a product of history. It is through the last, only, that man is distinguished from the beasts, and becomes an heir of all the labors and all the strength of the past generations."

Sonnenkamp nodded acquiescingly. His whole mien said, This man lays down very aptly what he heard yesterday from the lecturer's desk; and Eric continued, —

"Man alone comes into an inheritance, and an inheritance is the heaviest human responsibility."

"That is something new to me. I should like to ask for a fuller explanation."

"Permit me to illustrate: the beast receives from nature, from birth, nothing except its individual strength and its stationary instinctive capacity, while the human being receives from his progenitors and from humanity a superadded strength which he has not in himself, but of which he becomes possessor, and so he is the only inheritor. And let me say further, that it is difficult to decide whether it is harder to turn to good advantage that which a man is in himself, or that which he may receive, as for example your son will, as an inheritance. Most persons are of account only through what they possess. I consider this last of no trifling importance, but —"

"Wealth is no sin, and poverty is no virtue," Sonnenkamp interrupted. "I admit the depth and fineness of your perception in all this. I confess it is new to me, and I think that you have taken the right view. But whether, in the education of one individual boy, you shall find occasion for such great fundamental principles —"

"While engaged in the work of instruction," Eric quietly replied, "I shall not be likely to have directly before my eyes universal principles, as everything must be developed from its own basis. While one is loading, aiming, and firing off a musket, he does not define to himself the various physical laws that come into play, but he must know them in order to proceed in the right way."

Sonnenkamp was rather tired of this discussion; it was somewhat out of his line, and he had the unpleasant consciousness, that while trying to make an impression upon the stranger, he had himself been made to appear infinitely small.

"Pardon, gracious sir," a groom interposed, as Eric was beginning to expatiate anew. Sonnenkamp stood up hastily, and remarking that it was time for his ride, with affable condescension he waived with his hand the discussion to some other time.

He went quickly away. Roland came along the path, and called out, —

"I may ride out with Herr Dournay, may I not, papa?"

Sonnenkamp nodded, and departed with a hurried step. He mounted on horseback, and was soon to be seen riding a spirited black horse along the white high-road by the river. He made an imposing appearance as he sat on horse-back; the groom followed him.

CHAPTER V.

A NEW PATRON AND A NEW TUTOR.

By Roland's direction his own pony had been saddled, and also a horse for Eric. They mounted, and rode slowly through a part of the village which joined the estate. At the very end of it stood a small vine-covered house, with all the window-shutters closed. Eric asked who owned it, and why it was shut up. Roland told him that it belonged to his father, and that the architect, who built the villa, had lived there, and sometimes his father also, when he came from Switzerland or Italy during the building of the house, or the laying out of the park and garden.

"Now for a good trot," said Eric; "take your bridle more firmly in your left hand. Now!"

They started briskly, keeping side by side, but suddenly Eric's horse shied and began to rear. Roland uttered a cry, but Eric reassured him, saying, "I'll conquer him;" he drew his feet from the stirrups, and rode off at such a pace that the horse was soon covered with foam and quite submissive; then he rode back to Roland, who was waiting for him in anxiety.

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"Why did you throw off the stirrups?" he asked.

"Because I didn't want to hang by them if the horse fell backwards."

They rode on quietly near each other. Eric asked: —

"Which do you like best, to have some fixed object for your ride, or simply to go over a certain distance, and then turn back?"

Roland looked puzzled.

"Didn't you understand my question?"

"Yes, perfectly."

"And what do you think?"

"I like to have some object, a visit to pay, at the end of my ride."

"I thought you would say so."

"Only think," said Roland, "they say I must have another tutor."

"Indeed."

"But I won't."

"What do you want?"

"I want to get away from home and go to a military school! Why should Manna go to the convent? They always say that my mother can't eat unless I am with her, but she'll have to eat when I'm an officer."

"Then you want to be an officer?"

"Yes, what else should I be?"

Eric was silent.

"Are you a nobleman?" asked the boy, after a pause.

"No."

"Shouldn't you like to become one?"

"We cannot make ourselves noblemen."

The boy played with his horse's long mane; glancing back, he saw that the flag had been lowered from the tower. He pointed it out to Eric, saying haughtily that he should hoist it again. His fine, delicately cut, but pale face gained strength and color as it lost its weary look, and assumed a daring expression.

Without noticing his domineering manner, Eric said how much he liked Roland's pride in being an American.

"You are the first person in Germany who has commended it," cried the boy joyfully. "Herr von Pranken and Fräulein Perini are always ridiculing America; you are the only man, — but I beg your pardon, I ought not to be talking so familiarly to you."

"Put away that notion; we want to be good friends."

The boy held out his hand, and Eric pressed it warmly.

"See, our horses are good friends too," said Roland. "Have you many horses at home?"

"No, not any; I am poor."

"Wouldn't you like to be rich?"

"Certainly, wealth is a great power."

Roland looked at him in surprise; none of his tutors had said that to him; they had all represented wealth as a temptation and a vanity, or had extolled it for the sake of flattering him.

After some time, in which the boy was evidently thinking about Eric, he said, "Are you French, like your name?"

"No, I am a German, but my ancestors were French emigrants. How old were you when you came to Europe?"

"Four."

"Have you any recollection of America?"

"No, but Manna has. I can only remember a song which a negro used to hum, but I can't quite recall it, and nobody can sing it to me."

As they rode up the mountain, the little man, whom they had seen at work in the garden, stood aside to let them pass, and greeted them respectfully. They drew up, and Roland asked Nicholas, as the dwarf was called, why he was going home so early.

The little man replied that he was going home now at noon, and then into the wood to get some of the new earth which Herr Sonnenkamp had found. Up in the wood was a spring which contained iron, and Herr Sonnenkamp had dug down and found the earth also impregnated with iron. In this earth he had planted hydrangeas, and the flesh-colored flowers had changed to sky-blue.

The little man could not express all his wonder at Herr Sonnenkamp, who knew everything, and how to turn everything to account; it was no wonder that he had grown so rich, while stupid men might go all over the world, where millions were to be had, without ever knowing it.

But the little man took especial delight in telling them of a simple device of his master, who always mixed juniper leaves with the earth where he planted seeds of fruit-trees, and in that way kept away worms and mice.

As they rode on, Eric expressed his admiration for a man, who, like a second Columbus, was still making new discoveries in a world which seemed already explored and parcelled out. His readiness to appreciate, from a single example, Herr Sonnenkamp's greatness in this direction made Roland draw himself up in his stirrups, struck with surprise as he thought of the subject. He had never before heard his father so praised.

"Is there no one in the neighborhood whom you would like to call upon?" "No — or — yes, the major — but he is now at the castle. But up there in the village the

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huntsman Claus lives, he has our dogs — — will you go with me to see him? I must let him know how Nora's puppies are; he was with me an hour before you came."

Eric readily assented, and they trotted up the gentle ascent, turned into a side path, and dismounted before a small cottage. Dogs of various kinds came round them and jumped upon Roland; Puck also seemed to have friends; he played with a brown badger-dog. An old man came out of the house and touched his cap with a military salute. He wore the short, light-gray cotton jacket which is the easy and comfortable every-day dress of the country people along the Rhine, and he was smoking a clay pipe, on which a sort of Ascension of Napoleon was painted in glaring colors.

The tone and manner with which Roland presented his new friend to the huntsman, showed that he knew how to take an imperious tone toward his inferiors.

"Off with your cap," said he to the screamer; "only think, the captain knew by their whimper how old and of what breed Nora's puppies were, before he had seen them."

"Yes, one can do that," replied the screamer in a very loud voice, "one can do that. Dogs have their own peculiar whine and bark, according as they belong to a knowing or a stupid race; and stupid people, too, cry and complain quite differently from smart ones."

He cast a pleased glance upon Eric, and held his pipe in his hand for some time.

"You are right," said Eric. "I see you have had much experience and reflection."

"May be so," answered the huntsman.

He led the way into his house, and when Eric asked what saint it was whose picture hung on the wall, he replied, laughing,—

"That is my only saint, it is Saint Rochus of the mountain yonder, and I like him because he has a dog with him."

There were many bird-cages in the room, and such a twittering and confused singing, that one could hardly hear himself speak. The old man was very happy in explaining to Eric how he taught birds that lived on beetles and caterpillars to eat seeds, and how he got maggots and weevils also, and he complained of Roland's want of interest in the feathered tribe.

"No, I don't like birds," the boy declared.

"And I know why," said Eric.

"Do you? why then?"

"You have no pleasure in the free-flying creatures which you cannot make your own, and you don't like them imprisoned either. You like dogs because they are free and yet cling to us."

The dog-trainer nodded to Eric, as if to say, "You've struck the nail on the head."

"Yes, I do like you!" cried Roland, who had two young spaniels in his lap, while the mother stood by and rubbed her head against his side, and the other dogs crowded round.

"Envy and jealousy," said Eric, "are striking characteristics of dogs. As soon as a man caresses one, all the rest want to share the favor."

"There's one that doesn't trouble himself about it," said the trainer, laughing.

In the corner lay a small brown dog, that only blinked at them occasionally. Eric remarked that it must be a fox-hound, to judge from its appearance.

"Right, he understands dogs!" cried the screamer, turning to Roland. "You are right! I got that fellow out of a fox-hole, and he is and always will be an unfaithful and ungrateful beast, who is not to be trusted; do what you will for him, he is never thankful nor affectionate."

The dog in the corner just opened his eyes and shut them again, as if he didn't disturb himself about the talk of men.

Roland showed Eric his ferrets, which seemed to know him as he took them out of the cage. He pointed out a bright yellow one, as an especially cunning, tough rascal; he had given him the name of Buchanan. The name of the other he would not tell; it was really Knopf, but now he only said that he called him Master of Arts, because he always considered so long before he went into a hole, and moved his lips as if he were delivering a lecture.

They went into the garden, and the huntsman showed Eric his bee-hives. Turning to Roland, he said, —

"Yes, Roland, your father's flowers are good for my bees, if the poor little creatures didn't have to fly so far down to reach your garden. I let my cattle feed in other men's pastures, and the world hasn't yet got so far that rich men can forbid poor men's bees to suck honey from their flowers."

A sharp glance shot from his eyes as he said this, which expressed the whole rankling hostility of the poor towards the rich. The keeper complained that Sonnenkamp cherished so many nightingales, which certainly sang beautifully, but robbed the bees of their honey, and even ate the bees with the honey. The nightingale, which men prize so highly, is a cruel murderer of bees.

"Yes," answered Eric, "the nightingales do not know that the bees give honey, and we cannot blame the birds for considering them as plagues for whose destruction men will be grateful. However, they do not

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eat them altogether for our sakes but their own."

The screamer looked first at Eric, then at Roland, and nodded as if saying, "Yes, yes, that's quite another thing."

Roland now asked how far Griffin had been broken in. The reply was, that he would now run at the man, but he was still too wild, and his leap not quite regular, but he was beginning to seize hold. Roland desired to see him do it; but the day-laborer, who allowed himself to be experimented upon in that way, was not at home. Roland said that the dwarf was at home, and he would be ready to do it. He himself went after the dwarf.

After Roland had gone, the huntsman, Claus, hastily grasped Eric's hand, saying, "I will help you to catch him, and I can give the fellow slick into your hand."

Eric gazed in utter astonishment at the old man, who proceeded to inform him that he understood very well what he had come for, and whoever knew how could make out of Roland a proper man. He signified by a very sly wink that Eric would some day be exceedingly grateful to him, if he should help him out.

Before Eric could make any reply, Roland came back with the dwarf, who allowed a pillow to be fastened over his shoulders, and stationed himself at the garden-fence, holding fast by the palings with both hands. A large Newfoundland dog was let out of a kennel, and sprang about awkwardly in all directions, but at a whistle from the keeper stationed himself behind him.

The keeper now called out, "Griffin! catch him! At him!"

With a bound the dog leaped through the garden at the dwarf standing by the fence, jumped upon him, bit into the pillow, tugged at him until he fell over, and then placed his right fore-foot upon his breast, looking back at his master.

"Bravo! bravo! You see he is a real devil!"

"You are right!" exclaimed Roland. "Devil! that's just the name — Devil he shall be called. Now they will be afraid of me all over the neighborhood."

Eric was shocked at this insolent bravado as well as at the off-hand application of the idea. He appealed to the trainer whether a dog's name ought to be changed who had already cut all his teeth.

"Certainly not," asserted the man; "a dog whose name is changed don't know when he is called."

"And besides," added Eric, "it is wholly wrong to give a dog such a name. A dog's name ought to have an *a* in it, and have only one syllable; the letter *a* can be called aloud very easily."

"You are a great scholar; I never heard of the like before; you know everything;" the screamer went on in high commendation, winking at the same time merrily, and with half-sidelong glances.

Devil — for Roland persisted in giving the dog this name — would not come away from the dwarf, prostrate on the ground, although both Roland and the trainer called to him repeatedly. That was not a part of his lesson. He held on until the trainer showed his whip.

Roland gave the dwarf a piece of money, for which he was very abjectly grateful, and only wished that he might be thrown down in that way three times every day by the dog. Eric looked on meditatively. How was this rich youth to be made to learn to love, labor for, and influence the world which so laid itself at his feet?

When the two left the cottage, the trainer escorted them a part of the way, followed by a whole pack of dogs. They led their horses by the bridle, and the trainer, keeping exclusively by the side of Eric, made an ostentatious display of his whole stock of wisdom concerning the training of dogs. The huntsman considered himself infinitely clever, and all learned men stupid.

He seemed also to wish, in a sly way, to instruct Eric, when he said to him that as soon as a dog can stand without stumbling over his own legs, a beginning could be made. And it was an all-important thing not to say much to a dog, but to use short, simple words, such as "go!" "come!" "here!" but never any long speeches; and one must not make much of him, but leave him to himself for whole days; and if he wished to make friends, not to mind it, for if one gives too much attention to a dog he becomes troublesome; and any one whom a dog is to respect must not be found wanting at the hunt, especially when the dog is taken out for the first time; if one has shot any game that the dog can fetch, he will be faithful and true, but if one misses, he acquires no respect, and never gains over the dog.

"Do you know Herr Knopf?" the screamer asked abruptly. Eric answered in the negative.

"Yes; Herr Knopf," said the screamer, "has told me a hundred times, that all the school-masters ought to be under my tuition. Dogs and human beings are just alike. But the dogs are the more faithful beasts, and let themselves be broken in, and bite only when the master orders them to."

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Eric looked at the man in astonishment; there was in him an inexplicable bitterness, and this man was the boy's friend. He returned to their former topic, and the screamer chuckled when he said that beasts acquire something of the understanding of the men they are with.

The huntsman was very merry, and when they were about to separate, on reaching the level ground, he took Roland aside, and said to him: —

"Thou blustering fellow! all thy ramrod priests and school-masters have been of no account. That would be the man! Thy father ought to buy such a man as that, and then something might be made of thee. But all your money can't get him!"

The screamer said this ostensibly to Roland alone, but Eric was also to hear it, for he must know that he ought to be grateful to him.

Just as they mounted, the huntsman said further, —

"Do you know that your father is buying up the whole mountain? Cursed accumulation! Your father is buying the whole Pfaffen-street." At the same time, pointing to the far extending wide-spread Rhineland, he said, —

"In a hundred years, not one handbreadth of all those vineyards will belong to those who rake and dig there. Must that be? Can that be allowed?"

A brisk trot carried them back to the villa; Eric had made up his mind; at the very moment when Eric had said to himself, "It is your duty not to abandon the boy," he saw in the garden, near the small vine-embowered house, a female form which vanished round the corner.

Had he really seen his mother, or had she been only present to his imagination?

Quicker than one can compute, the idea was formed in his mind, that here his mother and his aunt were to dwell; this house with its little garden, its dwarf-trees, and its beautiful prospect was made ready for her.

"Did you see a woman there in the garden?" he asked Roland.

"Yes, it was Fräulein Milch.

"Who is Fräulein Milch?"

"The Major's housekeeper."

CHAPTER VI.

THE BREAD OF SERVICE AND THE BLESSING OF THE HUGUENOT.

When Eric and Roland returned from their ride, they learned that Herr von Pranken had arrived. Eric's portmanteau had also been carried to his room. The valet, Joseph, introduced himself as the son of the Professor of Anatomy's servant, and he mentioned, with perceptible emotions of gratitude, that Eric's father had given him a French Grammar, out of which he had learned by heart French phrases, in his spare moments at the Academic billiard-saloon, where he had been an attendant. He had there laid the foundation of his present prosperity, and he expressed his satisfaction at being able to thank the son of his benefactor.

Joseph helped Eric in his arrangements, and gave him information concerning the habits of the household; according to these, the next thing to be done was, that each one, before dinner, which was regarded as a sort of festive occasion, should repair in full dress to the pleasure-ground in summer, and in spring to Nice, — as that part of the covered walk on the terrace was called which had the best exposure to the sun.

Eric laid aside his uniform; he entered the covered walk, and there found Pranken and Fräulein Perini promenading up and down together. Pranken approached Eric with a bland smile that flickered upon his face, disappearing as quickly as it came. In the consciousness of his rank and his social position, he could afford a perfect courteousness of demeanor, in which even a certain degree of geniality might be observed. With a bow he again took a position by the side of Fräulein Perini, and continued his previous promenade and conversation with her.

Eric stood apart, and the admonition that he, as one in service, must not be sensitive, struggled with his pride. But it might be regarded as very considerate in Pranken, that he did not ask how it fared with his application for the position of tutor.

Roland now entered in full dress, and the boy was amazed to see Eric in citizen's clothes. Eric asked him, "Is your sister's name Manna?"

"Yes; Hermanna, in fact, but she is always called Manna. Have you ever heard of her?"

Eric had not time to reply that he had heard that name frequently mentioned by Pranken and Fräulein Perini, for Sonnenkamp entered in a black dress-coat, white neck-tie, and irreproachable yellow gloves. He was very gracious to everybody, one might say *appetizing* in his manner, as if he would say, "I hope you will all enjoy your dinner." Never was Sonnenkamp in a more cheerful mood, never more buoyant, than during the quarter of an hour before dinner.

They went into the dining-saloon, a cool, square, vaulted room, lighted from the roof.

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The carved oak furniture here was very massive. A large side-board, set out with beautiful antique vessels and Venetian glasses, displayed the rich silver plate. The whole neighborhood said that Herr Sonnenkamp ate out of golden plates; but this was a gossiping story.

They waited a few minutes in the dining-room until the folding-doors opened, when two servants in the coffee-colored livery of the house stood like guards, one on each side, and Frau Ceres, like a princess, stepped between them. At the threshold she courtesied somewhat stiffly; and Pranken, coming forward, conducted her to the table. A servant was stationed near each person, and drew back the chair whilst he took his seat; Fräulein Perini stood up behind her chair and leaned her arms upon the back, held the mother-of-pearl cross in her folded hands, said a prayer, made the sign of the cross, and sat down.

Frau Ceres, during the dinner, retained her yellow gloves, scarcely tasting any food, and appearing as if she had come to the table merely not to derange the order of things. She declined every dish, until Herr Sonnenkamp said: —

"Do take something, dear child, do, I pray you."

In his manner, in making this request, there was a double tone, hard to be distinguished separately. Sometimes it sounded like the call and signal of a tamer of wild beasts, who allowed some subdued animal to take the food lying before him; but again it sounded as when a father, fondly and coaxingly, beseeches his peevish child to eat something for his own good. Frau Ceres ate only a part of a bird, and some sweetmeats.

Pranken's demeanour at table was that of an honored guest, to whom was conceded the duty of paying particular attention to the hostess and conversing with her. He gave a humorous account of the horse-market at Mannheim, from which he had returned to-day at an early hour, with his companion; he had bought for the fall-races a gray mare, which he would be happy to transfer to Herr Sonnenkamp. And he soon took care to gain the good will of Frau Ceres. She had a special aversion to the family of the Wine-chevalier, who were very reserved towards the Sonnenkamp household. He proceeded to relate some ridiculous swaggerings of the Wine-chevalier, although he had been his own chosen companion.

He had also great skill in imitating the peculiar manner of speaking of different persons, and in introducing facetious anecdotes, which produced a movement of the muscles in the weary face of Frau Ceres, and frequently even a smile.

The conversation was carried on in Italian, which Pranken spoke pretty well, but in which Eric was not fluent. For the first time in his life, Eric sat at a table where he was obliged to keep as silent as the servants who were in waiting.

Frau Ceres considered it her place not to leave the stranger wholly neglected, and therefore she asked him in English if his parents were still living.

Assuming a patronising tone, Pranken went into an account of Eric's father and mother; he did it with marked friendliness of manner, and dwelt with special emphasis upon the fact that Eric's mother belonged to the nobility.

"Are you a Frenchman, as your name indicates?" Fräulein Perini inquired.

Eric once more repeated that his ancestors had immigrated into Germany two hundred years before; that he felt himself to be purely a German, and rejoiced to be descended from the Huguenots.

"Huguenots? — ah, yes! they sing that," Frau Ceres said, taking a childish delight in this knowledge.

Every one at the table was obliged to restrain himself from laughing aloud.

"Why was the name Huguenots given to them?" asked Roland, and Eric replied,

"Some people think that the name originated in the circumstance of their holding their secret religious assemblies at Tours, only by night, when the ghost of King Hugo appeared; but I am of the opinion of those who consider it a German word, originally Eidgenosse, meaning associates, and changed by the French into Huguenot."

Pranken nodded to Eric in a very friendly manner, as if he would give him a testimonial of his excellent qualifications as a tutor.

"You take pride, then, in your descent from the Huguenots?" asked Sonnenkamp.

"Pride is not precisely the word I should prefer," Eric answered.

"But you know that the Puritans, who were exiled to the New World on account of their religious belief, were the parent-stock of that substantial, conscientious, and courageous middle class; and that they carried with them and transplanted into their new homes, as the Greeks of old times into Sicily and Italy, a complete civilization."

The manner in which Eric uttered this, touching upon a great historical series of events, suddenly gave to the conversation at table a wholly new direction. They were at once taken out of the light, brief witticisms, and piquant personalities, into

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an entirely different atmosphere. Roland felt this to some extent, looked proudly at Eric, and was glad that his voice and his thoughts so overmastered all.

Sonnenkamp himself recognised here the serene presence of a higher nature, which always breathed in an elevated region; he could not help feeling a certain respect for the man, and at last put the question, "How do you associate the Pilgrim Fathers in America with the Huguenots?"

"Let me briefly explain," answered Eric. "The new age has broken through the stringent lines of demarcation between different nationalities, as, for example, the Jews have become actual and constituent parts of the various peoples among whom they have been scattered. A haughty and tyrannical king drove the Huguenots out of France, and they became Germans. The emigrating Englishmen imprinted their culture upon America; the emigrating Huguenots, established among a people already civilized, were obliged to adopt the social cultus of their new fatherland. Permit me, Herr Sonnenkamp, to take you as an example."

"Me? what do you mean?"

"You emigrated to America as a German, and the German emigrants in the New World become assimilated to their adopted home, and their children are completely American."

Roland's eye glistened, but whether it was that Pranken felt himself cast in the shade by Eric, or that he endeavored to embarrass him as much as possible, he exclaimed, with an odd mingling of humor and pity, —

"It is very modest in you to place the Huguenots, who almost all belonged to the gentry, in the same category with the Jews."

"I regard it as a matter of no consequence," Eric replied, "whether my ancestors belonged to the gentry or not; they were engaged in the common occupations of business and trade, and my immediate ancestors were goldsmiths. The resemblance of the Jews with the Huguenots, however, I must maintain. Every community exiled on account of its religion, and scattered abroad, incurs thereby a double obligation: first, to keep in view, over and above all nationality, the oneness of humanity; and second, to contend against all fanaticism and all exclusiveness. There is no one religion in which alone salvation is to be found, and no one nationality comprising in itself all excellence."

Pranken and Fräulein Perini looked at each other in astonishment. Frau Ceres was at a loss to comprehend what all this meant, and Sonnenkamp shook his head over this sermon-like style of his guest, who intermingled his world-wide historical views with the light table-talk; and yet he could not get rid of the impression that there was before him a nature that had its permanent abode in the region of pure thought.

"You must unfold that to me yet more definitely at some other time," he said, seeking to divert the conversation.

And Roland said: —

"Louis the fourteenth, who exiled your ancestors, is he the one who destroyed the castles here on the Rhine?"

"The same."

It seemed difficult to draw the conversation away from a subject which made it drag heavily, but it was suddenly diverted, for just then a highly seasoned dish was brought in, of which Roland desired to eat. His father would not permit it. His mother, perceiving it, cried out in a shrill voice, "Do let him eat what he likes."

A glance from Eric met Roland's eye, and the boy laid down the morsel that he was about putting into his mouth, saying, "I would rather not eat it."

Sonnenkamp made a sign to the servant to re-fill Eric's glass with Rauenthaler. This appeared to be his way of expressing his gratitude for the glance of Eric.

No new topics for light conversation came up. Pranken was silent, and it was uncertain whether he had exhausted his material, or whether he wished to make Eric conscious by this reticence how pedantically, and at the same time ostentatiously, he had disturbed the cordial good feeling of the table.

The cloth was removed. Fräulein Perini again repeated a prayer in a low tone, all stood motionless, and the servants having quickly drawn back the chairs, they repaired to the veranda, where coffee was served in very small cups.

Frau Ceres gave a biscuit to a snow-white parrot, and the parrot called out, "God bless you, massa." Then she sank down into an easy-chair, and Pranken placed himself near her on a low tabouret, sitting almost at her feet.

Fräulein Perini selected a seat sufficiently near, if she wished to take part in the conversation, and yet far enough off to allow Pranken to speak with Frau Ceres alone.

Sonnenkamp beckoned to Eric to go with him into the garden. Roland accompanied them without being asked.

The servant came to inform them that the huntsman Claus was with the puppies, and

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begged that the young gentleman would come to him.

"I give you permission to go," the father said.

"But I would prefer to remain with you here," Roland replied.

There was an expression of childlike fondness in the tone and gesture, as he grasped Eric's hand.

"If your father says that you may go, you should go," Eric quietly answered.

Roland departed with lingering steps, halting at intervals, but still he went.

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CHAPTER VII.

AN EXAMINATION THAT ENDS WITH A LAUGH.

For some time, the two walked silently side by side. Eric was dissatisfied with himself; he lived too exclusively in himself, and in the longing to arrange everything according to his own mental laws, and to express each truth in the most comprehensive way, throwing himself into it in the excitement of the moment with perfect freedom and naiveté, yet not unconscious of his intellectual riches.

Hence the hearers felt that what he said was not only inopportune, but was presented with a sort of zealous importunity. Eric acknowledged this and was conscious of it immediately afterward, when he had divested himself of himself; yet he was continually making the same mistake, which caused him to appear in an ambiguous light, and as if he were out of his appropriate place. Eric had a sort of clairvoyant perception how all this was affecting Sonnenkamp, but he could not discern the peculiar triumph that it afforded him over the visionary, as he smiled to himself at the green youth who served up such freshly-cooked dishes of sophomoric learning. He knows what it is, he has passed through it all. People settle themselves down there in the little university-town, and coming in contact with no one else, they live in a fantastic world of humanity, and appear to themselves to be personages of the greatest consequence, whom an ungrateful lack of appreciation hinders from manifesting their efficiency in actual life. And this captain-doctor now before him had only a small company of ideas under his command.

Sonnenkamp whistled to himself, — whistled so low that nobody but himself could hear the tune; he even knew how to set his lips so that nobody perceived him to be whistling.

He placed himself in a chair on a little eminence, and showed Eric also a seat.

"You must have noticed," he said at last, "that Fräulein Perini is a very strict Catholic, and all our household belong to the Church; may I ask, then, why you rang the changes so loudly upon your Huguenot descent?"

"Because I wish to show my colors, and nail them to the mast; for no one must ever take me for what I am not."

Sonnenkamp was silent for some time, and then he said, leaning back in his seat, —

"I am master in this house, and I tell you that your confession shall be no hindrance. But now" — he bent himself down, putting both hands on his knees and looking straight at Eric — "but now — I came very near falling from my horse to-day, which has never happened to me before, because I was deeply engaged, while riding, in reflection upon what you said to me — in brief — the main point of our conversation. How do you think that a boy who is to engage in no business and who is to come into possession of a million — or rather say, of millions — how do you think that such a boy is to be educated?"

"I can give a precise answer to that question."

"Can you? I am listening."

"The answer is simple. He cannot be educated at all."

"What! not at all?"

"That is what I affirm. The great mysterious Destiny alone can educate him. All that we can do is, to work with him, and to help him rule over and apply whatever strength he has."

"To rule over and to apply," Sonnenkamp murmured to himself; "that sounds well, and I must say that you confirm an impression which has often before this been made upon me. Only a soldier, only a man who has developed and trained his own inborn courageous energies, only such an one can accomplish anything great in our time; nothing can be done by sermons and books, for they cannot overcome the old, nor create the new age."

In a changed, almost cringingly humble tone, Sonnenkamp continued, —

"It may appear in the highest degree strange, that I, a man of little knowledge, who have not had time in the active business of life to learn anything rightly, — that I should seem to subject you to examination; but you must be convinced that I do it for my own instruction. I see, already, that I have even more to learn from you than Roland has.

"I pray you then to tell me what training — imagine yourself a father in my circumstances — what training you would give your own son."

"I believe," Eric answered, "that fantasy can call up all sorts of pictures, but a relation which is one of the mysteries of nature can only be known through experience, and cannot be apprehended by any stretch of the imagination. Permit me then to answer from my own outside point of view."

"Very well."

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"My father was the educator of a prince, and I think his task was the easier one."

"You would then place wealth above sovereignty?"

"Not at all; but in a prince the sense of duty is very early awakened. Not only pride but duty is a means, every moment, of inducing him to conduct himself as a prince. The formal assumption of state dignity, in which those in the highest rank are so accomplished, appears from a very early age as an essential feature of their position, as a duty, and becomes a second nature. Taste becomes connoisseurship. Pardon my scholastic ways," Eric laughingly said, breaking in upon his exposition.

"Don't stop — to me it is in the highest degree interesting."

Sonnenkamp leaned back in his seat, and gave himself up to the enjoyment of Eric's discourse, as if it were some choice tid-bit: very well for this man to go off into the regions of speculation, who in the meanwhile could not call his own the chair on which he sat, nor the spot of earth on which he stood, whilst he, Sonnenkamp, could proudly call his all that was around him, and could obtain possession, if he wished, of all that was within reach of his sight, and, as the keeper said, buy up the whole of the Rhinegau.

"Continue," he said, putting a fresh cigar in his mouth.

"It may seem laughable," resumed Eric, "but it is certainly significant that a prince receives, in his very cradle, a military rank. When reason awakens in him, he sees his father always under the ordinance of duty. I do not at all deny that this duty often sits very lightly upon him, if it is not wholly neglected, but a certain appearance of duty must always be preserved. The son of a rich man, on the other hand, does not see the duty which wealth imposes placed so peremptorily before his eyes; he sees beneficence, utility, the fostering of art, hospitality, but all this not as duty, but as free personal inclination."

"You come round again to the obligation imposed by social civilization. I pray you, however, — you have a decided talent for instruction, I see that plainly; and I am at any rate thankful to Count Clodwig and to you."

"A point for comparison occurs to me," Eric began anew.

"Go on," Sonnenkamp said, encouragingly.

"It was a custom, in the good old time, for German princes to learn some trade. Irrespective of all else, they learned how to understand and to esteem labor. The rich youth ought to have something like this, without its being suffered to degenerate into a mere hollow ceremonial."

"Very suggestive," Sonnenkamp asserted. He had proposed to himself only to make inquiries of Eric, only to procure a new species of enjoyment by allowing a learned idealist to open his whole budget; he had taken especial satisfaction in the thought that Eric would do this for his enjoyment, and would reap no advantage from it himself; he also experienced a certain delight in being able for once to journey into the region of the ideal — it seemed a very pretty thing — but only for one hour, for one half-day; and now he was unexpectedly awakened to a lively interest. He placed his hand upon Eric's arm, and said, —

"You are really a good teacher."

Eric continued, without remarking upon the compliment, —

"I set a very high value upon sovereignty; it is a great influence, and confers independence and self-possession."

"Yes, that is true. But do you know what is the most desirable thing, which money cannot buy?"

Eric shook his head, and Sonnenkamp continued, —

"A trust in God! Look! a poor vine-dresser was buried there day before yesterday. I would give half my property to purchase of him for the remainder of my life his trust in God. I could not believe what the physician said, but it was only the truth, that this vine-dresser, a real Lazarus covered with sores, in all his sufferings constantly said, 'My Saviour underwent yet severer pains, and God knows beforehand why he inflicts this upon me.' Now tell me if such a faith is not worth more than any millions of money? And I ask you now, do you feel yourself able to give this to my son, without making him a priest-ridden slave, or a canting devotee?"

"I do not think that I can. But there is a blessedness to be obtained from the depths of thought."

"Is there? and in what does it consist?"

"According to my opinion, in the blissful consciousness of acting according to the measure of our strength, and in harmony with the well-being of our fellow-men."

"I think that if I, when a boy, had had an instructor after your stamp, it would have been happy for me," Sonnenkamp exclaimed, in a tone entirely different from before.

Eric replied, "Nothing that you could say to me would give me more confidence and hopefulness than this utterance."

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A quick movement of the hand, as if he were throwing away some object, indicated that something went wrong with Sonnenkamp. This continued conversation wearied him, for he was not used to it, and this sort of immediate balancing of the ledger wounded his pride. Eric never remained in his debt, and he himself had always the feeling that there was something for him to pay.

For some time nothing was heard but the splashing of the fountain, and the gentle flowing of the Rhine, and at intervals the note of the nightingale singing unweariedly in the thicket.

"Did you ever have a passion for play?" Sonnenkamp asked unexpectedly.

"No."

"Were you ever passionately in love? You look at me in astonishment, but I asked only because I should like to know what has made you so mature."

"Perhaps a careful and thorough training has given me that serious thoughtfulness which you are so kind as to call maturity."

"Well, you are more than an educator."

"I shall be glad if it is so, for I think that he who is to bring anything to pass must always be something more than what his immediate activity calls for."

Sonnenkamp again made a wry face, and once more jerked his hand as if throwing something away. This readiness always to return the blow, and this assured response, put him out of countenance.

They heard Pranken and Fräulein Perini walking up and down in a side-walk.

"You must take care to stand in good relations with Fräulein Perini," Sonnenkamp said, as he rose; "for she is also — she is of some importance, and is not very easily fathomed, and she has one great advantage over most persons I know,—she has that most valuable trait of never indulging in any whims."

"I am sorry to say that I cannot boast of any such trait, and I ask your pardon in advance if I ever —"

"It is not necessary. But your friend, Pranken, understands very well how to be on good terms with Fräulein Perini."

Eric considered that truth demanded of him to inform Sonnenkamp that he had no right to call Pranken a friend of his. They were in the military school together, and acquainted in the garrison, but their ideas had never chimed together, and his own views in life had always been wholly different from those of a rich elder son; he acknowledged the kindness with which Pranken had facilitated his entrance into the family of Sonnenkamp, but the truth must be spoken in spite of all feelings of gratitude. Sonnenkamp again whistled inaudibly; he was evidently amazed at this courageous openness of mind, and the thought occurred to him that Eric was a subtle diplomatist, he himself considering it the chief peculiarity of diplomacy not to make any confession of being under obligation of any sort. This man must be either the noblest of enthusiasts or the shrewdest of worldlings.

Eric felt that this confession was untimely, but he could not anticipate that this communication would counteract the whole impression previously made upon Sonnenkamp.

On meeting Pranken and Fräulein Perini, Sonnenkamp greeted the Baron in a very friendly way, and took his arm.

Eric joined Fräulein Perini. She always carried some nice hand-work; with very small instruments and with a fine thread, she completed with surprising quickness a delicate piece of lace-work. It was the first time that Eric had spoken with her, and he expressed his great admiration for her pretty, delicate work. But immediately it was fixed as firmly as if there had been a written covenant between them, — We shall avoid each other as much as possible, and if we are placed in the same circle, we shall conduct ourselves just as if there were no such persons in the world.

In contrast with the clear, full tone of Eric, Fräulein Perini always spoke in a somewhat husky voice; and when she perceived that Eric was surprised at hearing her, she said, —

"I thank you for not asking me if I am not hoarse. You cannot imagine how tiresome it is to be obliged to reply, again and again, that I have always spoken so from my childhood."

Eric gladly entered into this friendly mood, and related how troublesome it was to a friend of his, born on the 28th of February, to have the remark always made to him, It is fortunate for you that you were not born on the 29th, for then you would have had only one birth-day every four years. "He has now accustomed himself to say pleasantly, 'I was born on the 28th of February, and it is fortunate for me that I was not born on the 29th, for then I should have had only one birth-day every four years.'"

Fräulein Perini laughed heartily, and Eric was obliged also to laugh.

"What are you laughing at?" Sonnenkamp asked, drawing near. Laughing was the thing of all others that he most delighted in.

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Fräulein Perini narrated the story of Eric's friend, and Sonnenkamp laughed too.

The day continued after that serene and unruffled.

CHAPTER VIII.

EYES OPENED.

WHILE Eric was in the garden with Herr Sonnenkamp, Roland sat with Claus near the young dogs. The huntsman asked him whether all was settled with the captain, and seeing that he did not understand his meaning, he laughed to himself as he thought he might win a double reward.

"What will you give me," he asked, "if I manage to have the captain stay with you as a companion and teacher? Whew!" he interrupted himself suddenly, "you look like a dog whose eyes are opened for the first time. Come, tell me — what will you give me?"

Roland could not answer; everything was giddy and confused in his thoughts, and the young dogs seemed to be whirling round and round.

Joseph came into the stable, and after representing Eric's parents as veritable saints, he concluded, —

"You ought to be proud, Master Roland; the father educated the prince, and now the son is to educate you."

"Open the shutters, quick!" cried Claus suddenly. Joseph did so, and the trainer took up one of the puppies, drew up its eyelids, and exclaimed, "There, that's enough to show me that this one's eyes are just opening. Now don't let any more light in, or they will be spoiled."

In his interest in the animals, Claus forgot his shrewd two-fold plan; he went with Roland and Joseph into the court, where Roland immediately left them. He saw his father and Eric sitting together, and felt angry with Eric for not telling him directly who he was. Soon overcoming this feeling, however, he would gladly have hastened to him and embraced him, but he restrained himself, and only approached when he heard the whole party laughing.

He pressed close to Eric confidingly, and his eyes said, "I thank you; I know who you are."

Eric did not understand his glance, until Roland said, —

"The others have had you long enough, now come with me."

He accompanied Eric to his room, and seemed to be waiting to talk with him, but Eric begged to be left alone; he was inexpressibly weary, and, like a heavy burden, there lay upon his spirit the consciousness that he who enters the service of others cannot live his own life; especially if he attaches to himself a faithful soul which he is to mould, sustain, and guide, he must never be weary, never say, "Now leave me to myself," but must be always ready, always expectant, always at the beck and call of others.

Roland was much troubled at Eric's look of fatigue; he could not suspect that he was extremely dissatisfied with himself. It was not merely the weariness after imparting extensive and various knowledge which often brings a sense of exhaustion, it was pure chagrin that he had allowed himself to be beguiled into drawing a plan of vast extent, and for what object? The education of a single boy.

Eric's chief vexation was, however, that he was obliged to acknowledge himself still so undisciplined; he must become more self-restrained before he could give stability and right training to another. In this state of discontent he hardly heard the boy, who talked on about the wonderful opening of the dog's eyes, and kept asking him questions, and looking inquiringly in his face.

A servant entered, and announced that the carriages were ready for a drive.

Eric was startled. What sort of a life was this? To promenade in the garden, ride, drive, eat, amuse one's self. How could he guard and preserve his own inner life? How would it be possible to hold a young spirit to a definite course of constant self-development?

Eric's pride rose; he had not worked all his life for this, — exercised himself in earnest and strict renunciation for the sake of filling the intervals between driving and banqueting. The plan would be unbearable; he would have an arrangement which he could control and to which he could give the tone of his own mind.

He went into the court with Roland, and politely asked to be excused from the drive, as he felt the necessity of being alone for a few hours.

This announcement was received by glances of various expression. Herr Sonnenkamp said quickly, that he laid no sort of constraint upon his guests: Pranken and Fräulein Perini exchanged looks in which there seemed to be a malicious pleasure in the harm that Eric had done himself by the wilfulness which led to a want of tact.

Roland said at once that he would like to stay at home with Eric, but Pranken rejoined in an exultant tone:

"Herr Dournay just wishes to be alone;

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if you stay with him, my dear Roland, the gentleman will just not be alone."

He uttered the word "gentleman" in a peculiarly disagreeable tone.

The second carriage was sent away. Fräulein Perini, Pranken, and Roland entered the other; Sonnenkamp seated himself on the box; he was fond of managing four horses from the box-seat; four-in-hand was a great delight to him. This driving four-in-hand was generally taken for ostentation, but it was only a personal gratification.

Frau Ceres also remained behind; she had already exerted herself to be social quite enough for that day.

Eric watched the party drive off, then returned to his room.

He sat there alone in perfect quiet, more weary than it would have seemed possible to become in so short a time, but the day had been one of excitement, and full of a violent effort to make himself master over novel circumstances. How much he had been through! It seemed years since he looked over the Roman antiquities with Clodwig. During the day he had been obliged to turn over and over, and to unfold his own character and environment; he had tasted for the first time the humble bread of servitude, and the feeling, half of friendliness, half of ingratitude, the enigmatic in Sonnenkamp, in Roland, in Fräulein Perini, and Frau Ceres, seemed to him like the dim memory of a dream, like a far-off life, as his thoughts went home to his mother.

A profound home-sickness threatened to overcome him, but he shook it off resolutely. It must not be! His military training helped him; his orders were to stand at his post, keep a close watch, and never to tire.

"Never to tire!" he said half aloud to himself, and the consciousness of youthful vigor supported him. He felt that on the next day he could meet the problems before him full of fresh courage; and one thought above all others strengthened him, and lightened his heart: he had remained faithful to the truth, and so should it always be. Truth is that firm standpoint of mother-earth where the wrestling spirit is not to be conquered and thrown.

In the distance, from the railway station across the river, he now heard an idle locomotive blowing off steam. It snorted, shricked, and panted like a fabulous monster; and Eric thought, This engine has all day been drawing trains of cars in which hundreds of human beings had, for the time, been seated, and now it is resting and letting off its hot steam. He smiled as he thought that he himself was almost such a locomotive, and was now cooling himself, to be fired up anew on the morrow.

Suddenly he was waked from sleep; for he had slept without intending to do so. A servant announced that Frau Sonnenkamp wished to speak to him.

CHAPTER IX.

A TWILIGHT RIDDLE.

The sun had set, but a golden haze enveloped valley, mountain and river, when Eric went with the servant, and from the corridor looked out over the distant prospect. He was conducted through several rooms. In the last, where a ground-glass hanging-lamp was lighted, he heard the words, "I thank you,— be seated."

He saw Frau Ceres reclining on a divan, a large rocking-chair standing before her. Eric sat down.

"I have remained at home on your account," Frau Ceres began; she had a feeble, timid voice, and it was evidently difficult for her to speak.

Eric was at a loss what to reply.

Suddenly she sat upright, and asked, —

"Are you acquainted with my daughter?"

"No."

"But you've been to the convent on the island?"

"Yes; I had a greeting to deliver from my mother to the Lady Superior — nothing farther."

"I believe you. I am not the cause of her becoming a nun — no, not I — do not think it," and reclining again on the pillow, Frau Ceres continued,—

"I warn you, captain, not to remain here with us. I have been informed of nothing — he has let me be informed of nothing — but do not stay with us, if you can find any other employment in the world. What is your purpose in coming into this house?"

"Because I thought — until an hour ago I believed — that I could be a fitting guide to your son."

And now Eric gave utterance to his inmost feeling of unfitness for being another's guide, and yet he must confess that no other person could have a stronger inclination to be, only some other might perhaps take it more easily. He unfolded from the very depths of his soul the newly awakened longing to plunge into solitary meditation, and lamented that one builds up an ideal of life and of work only to have it shattered in pieces upon the rock of actual existence;

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but it was only unvanquished self-seeking, for which his own thought, and not the world, was to blame.

"I am not learned — I don't understand you," Frau Ceres replied. "But you speak so beautifully — you have such good expressions — I should like always to hear you speak, even if I do not understand what you are saying. But you will not let him know anything about my having sent for you?"

"Him? Whom?" Eric wished to ask, but Frau Ceres raised herself up hastily, and said,—

"He can be terrible — he is a dangerous man — no one knows it, no one would imagine it. He is a dangerous man! Do you like me too?"

Eric trembled. What did that mean?

"Ah! I do not know what I am saying," continued Frau Ceres.

"He is right — I am only half-witted. Why did I send for you? Yes, now I know. Tell me about your mother. Is she really a learned and noble lady? I was also a noble lady — yes, I was one indeed."

A fresh shiver passed over Eric. Is this half lethargic, half raving person really insane, and kept within bounds in society only by the greatest care?

He had wished this very morning to write to his mother that he had come into fairy-land,— the fairy land was yet more marvellous than he had himself fancied.

Eric depicted with extreme precision, as far as a son could, the character of his mother; how she was always so very happy, because she was contriving how to make others happy. He described the death of his father, the death of his brother, and the greatness of soul with which his mother endured all this.

Frau Ceres sobbed; then she said suddenly,—

"I thank you — I thank you!"

She extended her white hand to Eric, and kept saying,—

"I thank you! With all his money he has not been able to make me know that I could weep once more. O, how much good it does me! Stay with us — stay with Roland. He cannot weep — say nothing to him — I also should like to have a mother. Stay with us. I shall never forget it of you — I thank you — now go — go — before he returns — go — good-night!"

Eric went back to his chamber. What he had experienced seemed to him like a dream; the hidden element of mystery which seemed at Wolfsgarten to envelop the family of Sonnenkamp was more and more evident. Here were the strangest sorts of riddles. Roland, full of life and spirits, came to him; the brief separation had given both a new and joyful pleasure in meeting again; it was as great as if they had been separated for years.

Roland asked Eric to tell him about the Huguenots; there had evidently been much talk about them during the drive. Eric put him off, saying that it was not necessary, at least not now, to dwell upon the horrible tortures which human beings inflicted upon one another on account of their religious belief.

Roland informed Eric that Herr von Pranken was going the next day to visit Manna at the convent.

Eric was doubtful what he ought to do. If he were to forbid the boy's informing him of what he heard, he would scare away his confidingness, his perfect confidence; and yet it was disagreeable to himself to be informed of things which might not be intended for him to hear. He proposed to himself for the future, to request Sonnenkamp to say nothing in the hearing of the boy which he ought not to know. Eric was summoned once more to tea; Frau Ceres did not make her appearance.

Eric was this evening perplexed, and lost the feeling of untroubled security.

Should he tell Sonnenkamp that his wife had sent for him? But then he must inform him of what she had revealed to him, though it was only half uttered,— it was a warning, a speech wholly disjointed and incoherent.

Eric also saw Roland looking at him as if beseeching. The boy felt that some painful experience was going on in his new friend, which he would gladly remove. And to Eric's affection there was superadded the feeling of pity. Here was a manifestly distressing family relation under which the boy must have suffered, and it was a fortunate thing that his light, youthful spirits were untouched.

Eric was reminded continually of an experience of his in the house of correction. The most hardened criminals had avowed always with the most triumphant mien, that it conferred the greatest satisfaction to them to be able to conceal their deeds from the world; but the least hardened disclosed, on the other hand, how glad they felt to be punished; for the fear of discovery, and the constant endeavour to conceal the crime, were the severest punishment.

Eric had now a secret; was he to let it be possible for a servant to betray him, and himself appear untrustworthy?

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When Eric was about to go to rest, Roland came to him and asked whether he had anything to impart to him.

Eric replied in the negative, and the boy appeared sad when he said good-night.

CHAPTER X.

A NEW DAY AND DARK QUESTIONS.

The morning dew glistened on grass, flower, and shrub, and the birds sang merrily, as Eric walked through the park. There was evidence everywhere of an ordering, busy, and watchful mind.

Eric heard, on the bank of the river, two women talking with each other, as they carried on shore the garden-earth out of a boat.

"God be praised," said one, "who has sent the man to us; no one in the place who is willing to work need suffer poverty any more."

"Yes," spoke the other, "and yet there are people here who are so bad as to say all sorts of things about the man."

"What do they say?"

"That he has been a tailor."

Eric could hardly restrain himself from laughing aloud. But a third woman, with a rather thick voice, said,—

"A tailor indeed! He has been a pirate, and in Africa stole a gold-ship."

"And supposing he did," said the other, "those man-eaters have heaps of gold, and are heathens beside, and Herr Sonnenkamp does nothing but good with his gold."

Eric could not help smiling at these strange tales and implications; and it was also painful to him that great wealth always stirred up new and calumnious reports.

He went on farther. He saw from a height, with satisfaction, how the main building and all its dependencies, with park and garden, were combined in a beautiful harmony. Near the main building there were only trees of a dark foliage, lindens, elms, and maples, which brought out, by contrast, so much the more brightly the brilliant architecture of the house built in a good Renaissance style. The arbored walks converged gradually, as if conducting to the solidly-built mansion, which seemed not to be built upon the ground, but as if it had sprung up from the soil with the scenery that surrounded it; the stone colonnades, the lawns, the trees, the elevations, all were an introduction to the house; all was in harmony. The verandas appeared to be only bearers of the climbing plants, and the whole was a masterpiece of rural architecture, a work of natural poetry according to the laws of pure art, so that all that was man's handiwork seemed as fresh as if it had just come out of the builder's hand, and in such perfect preservation, that one perceived that each tree, each leaf, each lattice, was owned and carefully cherished by a wealthy man.

Eric, however, was not to be long alone; the valet, Joseph, joined him, and with a pleasing deference offered to inform Eric concerning everything in the household.

As Eric was silent, Joseph related once more that he had been a billiard-boy at the University, Henry the thirty-second, for all the boys must be called Henry. Then he had been a waiter in the Berne Hotel at Berne, where Sonnenkamp had boarded for almost two summers long, occupying the whole first floor — the best rooms in the world, as Joseph called them — and had learned to know him, and taken him into his service. Joseph gave rather a humorous account of the corps of servants in the household, that it was a sort of menagerie gathered from all countries. As in a poultry yard there are all sorts of fowls, and even the peacock is not wanting, which shrieks so horribly and looks so beautifully, so it was with the people here, for Herr Sonnenkamp had travelled all over the world. The coachman was an Englishman, the first groom a Pole, the cook a Frenchman, the first chamber-maid a thorough-going Bohemian, and Fräulein Perini an Italian Frenchwoman of Nice. The master was, however, very strict; the gardeners must not smoke in the park, nor the grooms whistle in the stable, for all the horses were accustomed to the whistle of the master, and must not be disturbed. And moreover, Herr Sonnenkamp would rather not have his servants look like servants, or have any peculiar dress of servants, and it was only a short time ago that he had given in to his wife, and dressed a few of them in livery. The servants were allowed to speak only a few words, and there were particular words which Herr Sonnenkamp used to each of them, and which each used in answering, and so all were kept in good order.

Joseph related in conclusion, not without self-satisfaction, that he had spread abroad in the servants' room the fame of Eric's parents; it was a good thing for people to know where a man came from, for then they had a much greater respect. But that Madame Perini was the special mistress in the household, and would continue to be; she was really a Fräulein, but the gracious Frau called her always Madame.

"The keeper is right," added Joseph. "Fräulein Perini is a woman with the

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strength of seven cats, and a marten into the bargain."

Eric wished to hinder this revelation, but Joseph begged him to allow everything to be spoken out, and to pardon him as being a University acquaintance. He only added the information that Pranken was to marry the daughter of the house.

"Ah! that is a beauty! not exactly a beauty, but lovely and charming; formerly she was so frolicsome, no horse was too wild for her, no storm on the Rhine too violent; she hunted like a poacher, but now she is only sad — always sad — vilely sad."

Eric was glad when the gossiping youth suddenly drew out his watch, and said: —

"In one minute the master gets up, and then I must be near him. He is a man always up to time," he added as he went away.

Like confused echoes which gradually mingle into one sound, Eric thought upon all that he had now heard about the daughter of the house. And was not this the girl with wings, who had met him the day before yesterday in the convent? Involuntarily standing still, and staring at a hedge, a whole life-picture presented itself to his mind. Here is a child sent to the convent, removed from all the world, from all intercourse with people; she is taken out of the convent, and they say to her: "Thou art the Baroness Pranken!" and she is happy with the handsome and brilliant man, and all the dazzling splendor of the world is showered upon her through him. It seems as if he had called it all into being, and this without knowing what kind of a man her husband is, — it will be indeed a good thing for her not to know.

He shook his head. What was the little cloister-plant to him?

Eric saw nothing more of the gorgeous beauty of the garden; he hastened out of it with his eyes fixed upon the ground, wandered through the park, and just as he came out of a copse of trees by the pond, Sonnenkamp met him. He had a foreign look in his short gray plush-jacket fastened with cord, and was especially glad to find Eric already up, proposing to himself to show him the house and grounds.

He directed his attention first to a large tuft of prairie-grass; he smiled as Eric imagined a stampede of buffaloes, and he made a peculiar motion of throwing, in describing how he had caught many a one with the lasso.

Then he led Eric to an elevation set out with beautiful plane-trees, which he pointed out as the very crown of the whole place. He prided himself very much upon these fair and flourishing trees, adding that in such a tract as the wine-district, destitute of shade, a thickly shaded place was a thing to be taken into consideration against a hot day of summer.

"You will perceive that I have gone beyond my own territory, in order to add to its beauty; above there upon the height is a group of trees, which I have kept in order and thinned out, laying out paths, and making new plantations, in order to get a picturesque view. I have built my house not to please the eyes of others, but where I could have the best prospect from it. The peasant's house yonder was built after a plan of my own, and I was very properly obliged to contribute a part of the cost. That plantation beyond is a screen to hide the glaring stone-quarry; and that pretty church spire above there in the mountain-village, — that was built by me. I was very highly praised for doing it, and a great deal of flattering, pious incense was burned for me, but I can assure you that my sole motive in doing it was to gain a fine view. I am obliged to change the whole character of the region — a very difficult job — and here comes in the covetousness of people. Just see, a basket-maker builds him a house yonder, with a horribly steep roof covered with red tiles, that is a perpetual eye-sore to me; and I cannot reach the fellow. He wishes to sell the house to me for an extravagant price, but what can I do with it? He may just keep it, and accommodate himself to my arrangements."

There was a violent energy in Sonnenkamp's manner of speaking, reminding Eric of an expression of Bella's, that the man was a conqueror; such an one has always something tyrannical in him, and desires to arrange and dispose everything in the world according to his own individual taste, or his own personal whims. The villages, the churches, the mountains, and the woods, were to him only points in the landscape, and they must all come into one favorite angle of vision.

And now Herr Sonnenkamp conducted his guest through the park, and explained to him how he had arranged the grounds, and how through the disposition of elevations and depressions he had broken up the uniformity; but that in many cases he had only to bring out the natural advantages, and give them their right effect: he pointed out the careful disposition of light and shadow, and how he oftentimes set out a clump of trees, a little group of the same species, which he mingled together not in sharp and distinct contrast, but in regular gradation of colors, such as we see in nature.

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Sonnenkamp smiled in a very friendly way, when Eric, in order to show that he comprehended, replied, that a park must appear to be nature brought into a state of cultivation; and that the more one knows how to conceal the shaping hand and the disposing human genius, and allows all to appear as a spontaneous growth, so much the more is it in accordance with the pure laws of art.

A little brook, which came down from the mountain and emptied into the river, was made to wind about with such skill, that it kept disappearing and appearing again at unexpected points, saying by its murmur, "Here I am."

In the disposition of resting-places, particularly good judgment was exhibited. Under a solitary weeping-ash that cast a perfectly circular shadow, a pretty seat was placed for a single person, and it seemed to say invitingly, "Here thou canst be alone!" The seat, however, was turned over, and leaned up against the tree.

"This is my daughter's favorite spot," Sonnenkamp said.

"And have you turned over the seat, so that no one may occupy it before your child returns?"

"No," Sonnenkamp replied, "that is entirely by chance, but you are right, so it shall be."

The two went on farther, but Eric hardly saw the beautiful, comfortable benches, and hardly listened while Sonnenkamp declared to him that he did not place these on the open path, but behind shrubbery, so that here was a solitude all ready made.

A table was placed under a beautiful maple, with two seats opposite one another. Sonnenkamp announced that this place was named the school; for here Roland at intervals received instruction. Eric rejoined that he never should teach sitting in the open air; it was natural to give instruction while walking, but regular, definite teaching, which demanded concentration of the mind, demanded also an enclosed space in which the voice would not be utterly lost.

Sonnenkamp had now a good opportunity to tell Eric what conclusion he had arrived at in regard to the matter in hand, but he was silent. As an artist takes delight in the criticisms of an intelligent observer, who unfolds to him concealed beauties which he was hardly aware of himself, so he took delight in perceiving how understandingly, and with how much gratification, Eric took note of the various improvements, and of the grouping of trees and shrubs.

They stood a long time before a group where the gloomy cedar was placed near the hardy fir, and the gentle morning breeze whispered in the foliage of the silver poplar, and caused the white leaves to glisten like little rippling waves upon the surface of a lake.

Near a little pond with a fountain was a bower of roses, upon a gentle elevation, patterned according to a dream of Frau Ceres; and here Sonnenkamp remained stationary, saying:

"That was at the time when I was still very happy here in our settlement, and when everything was still in a sound and healthy condition."

Eric stopped, questionin whether he ought to tell Herr Sonnenkamp of yesterday's strange occurrence. Sonnenkamp said, accompanying his words with peculiar little puffs, as if he were lightly and carefully blowing a fire, —

"My wife often has strange whims; but if she is not contradicted she soon forgets them."

He appeared suddenly to remember that it was not necessary to say this, and added with unusual haste, —

"Now come, and I will show you my special vanity. But let me ask you one thing; does it not seem dreadful to you, who are a philosopher, that we must leave all this, that we know we must die; and while everything around continues to grow green and bloom, he who planted and acquired the means to plant is here no more, but moulders in the dust?"

"I should not have believed that you indulged in such thoughts."

"You are right to answer so. You must not ask such questions, for no one knows their answer," said Sonnenkamp sharply and bitterly; "but one thing more. I wish Roland to understand rightly this creation of mine and to carry it on, for such a garden is not like a piece of sculpture, or any finished work of an artist; it is growing, and must be constantly renewed. And why should there not be granted us the certainty of transmitting to our posterity what we have conquered, created, or fashioned, without fear that strangers will at some time enter into possession and let all go to waste?"

"You believe," answered Eric, "that I know no answer to the first of your questions, and I must confess, that I do not quite understand the second."

"Well, well, perhaps we will talk of it again — perhaps not," Sonnenkamp broke off. "But come now and let me show you my special pride."

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CHAPTER XI.

SONNENKAMP'S PRIDE.

They stepped immediately out of the shady, well-wooded park, whose margin was planted with noble white-pines, into a wonderful and complicated arrangement of orchard-trees, in a level field several acres in extent, that had a truly magical effect.

The plats were bordered with dwarf-apple and pear-trees that looked very much like small yews; their stems were hardly two feet in height, and the branches on each side so disposed on wires, that they extended to the width of thirty feet. These were now in full bloom the whole length, and the arrangement exhibited man's energetic and shaping volition, where nature was compelled to become a free work of art, and even warped into a dwarfish over-refinement. Trees of all imaginable geometrical forms were placed, sometimes in circles and sometimes in rows. Here was a tree that, from the bottom to the top which shot up into a sharp point, had only four branches at an even distance from each other, and directed to the four cardinal points. On the walls, trees were trained exactly in the shape of a candelabrum with two branches; others had stems and branches adjusted obliquely, like basaltic strata. All was according to artistic rules, and also in the most thriving condition.

Eric listened attentively while Sonnenkamp was informing him that the limbs must be cut in, so that the sap might all perfect the fruit, and not go too much to the formation of wood.

"Perhaps you have a feeling of pity for these clipped branches?" Sonnenkamp asked in a sharp tone.

"Not at all; but the old, natural form of the fruit-trees so well known to us—"

"Yes, indeed," Sonnenkamp broke in, "people are horrible creatures of prejudice! Is there any one who sees anything ugly, anything coercive, in pruning the vine three times every season? No one. No one looks for beauty, but for beautiful fruit, from the vine; so also from the fruit-tree. As soon as they began to bud and to graft, the way was indicated, and I am only following it consistently. The ornamental tree is to be ornamental, and the fruit-tree a fruit-tree, each after its kind. This apple-tree must have its limbs just so, and have just so many of them, as will make it bear the largest apples and the greatest possible number. I want from a fruit-tree not wood, but fruit."

"But nature——"

"Nature! Nature!" Sonnenkamp exclaimed, in a contemptuous tone. "Nine-tenths of what they call nature is nothing but an artificial sham, and a whimsical conceit. The spirit of nature and the spirit of the age are a pair of idols which you philosophers have manufactured for yourselves. There is no such thing as nature, and there is no such thing as an age; and even if there were both, you cannot predicate spirit of either of them."

Eric was deeply struck by this apparently combative and violently aggressive manner of speaking; and yet more so, when Sonnenkamp now leaned over suddenly, and said:—

"The real man to educate would be he who was able to train men as these trees are trained: for some immediate end, with no superfluous trash and no roundabout methods. What they call nature is a fable. There is no nature, or at least only an infinitesimal particle. With us human beings everything is habit, education, tradition. There's no such thing as nature."

"That is something new to me," Eric said, when he was at last able to put in a word. "The gentlemen of tradition call us men of science deniers of God, but a denier of nature I have never until now become acquainted with, and never have even heard him mentioned. You are joking."

"Well, yes, I am joking," said Sonnenkamp, bitterly.

And Eric, who seemed to himself to be utterly bewildered, added in a low tone:—

"Perhaps it may be said that those who derive the laws of our life from revelation deny nature, or rather they do not deny her, but disregard her."

"I am not a learned man, and, above all, I am no theologian," Sonnenkamp abruptly broke in. "All is fate. Damage is done by worms in the forest; there stands near us an oak-tree clean eaten up by them, and there stands another all untouched. Why is this? No one knows. And look here at these trees. I have watched what they call the economy of nature, and here a thousand life-germs perish in order that one may thrive; and it is just the same in human life."

"I understand," Eric said. "All the things that survive have an aristocratic element wholly different from those things that perish; the blossom that unfolds itself to the perfect fruit is rich, the blighted one is poor. Do I rightly apprehend your meaning?"

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"In part," Sonnenkamp replied, somewhat weary. "I would only say to you that I have done looking for the man, for I despair of finding him, who could train my son, so that he would be fitted in the most direct way for his position in life."

For some time the two walked together through the marvellously-blooming garden, where the bees were humming; and Eric thought that these, probably, were the bees of Claus, the huntsman.

World passing strange, in which all is so unaccountably associated together!

The sky was blue, and the blossoms so deliciously fragrant, and yet Eric, deeply troubled in spirit, seemed to himself to be insnared when he fixed his eyes upon a notice stuck up over the garden wall, which ran thus: —

"Warning. Spring-guns and steel-traps in this garden."

He looked around to Sonnenkamp, who said, smiling, —

"Your look asks me if that notice yonder is true; it is just as that says. People think that no one dares to do that now. Keep always in the path near me."

Sonnenkamp appeared to enjoy Eric's perplexity and annoyance. And yet it was a lie, for there were no spring-guns nor steel-traps in the garden.

On this part of the wall, stars, circles, and squares, were shaped out of the tree-twigs; and Sonnenkamp laid his hand upon the shoulder of Eric, as the latter asserted that number and geometric form were given only to man. Geometric form, indeed, was the basis of all manifestation, and the straight line was never actually seen, but must be wholly the product of man's conception. This was also the characteristic mystery in the doctrine of Pythagoras.

"I have thought for a long time," Sonnenkamp said with a laugh, "that I was a Pythagorean. I thank you for nominating me as one of the sect. We must christen our new art of gardening the Pythagorean."

This outburst was in a bantering tone of contempt and satisfaction.

They came to the place called Nice, by the colonnade constructed in the Pompeian style, which extended very far on the second terrace of the orchard.

"Now I will show you my house," Sonnenkamp said, pressing against a little door which opened upon a subterranean passage, and conducting his guest into the habitation.

CHAPTER XII.

A LOOK INTO THE HOUSE AND INTO THE HEART.

Men-servants and maid-servants in the under-ground rooms were amazed to see Sonnenkamp and Eric make their entrance. Sonnenkamp, without noticing them, said to Eric in English: —

"The two things to be first considered by a man consulting for repose, as I am, are the kitchen and the stable."

He showed him the kitchen. There were dozens of different fire-places for the different dishes, and each kind of meat and vegetables; each viand had its special dish and pan, fire on the side and behind. The whole science of the preparation of extracts was here transported into the art of cookery. Eric was delighted with it as with a work of art.

Sonnenkamp pointed out to his guest for special notice the fact that every fire-place and every stove in the house had its own chimney; he considered that as of great importance, as he had by that means made himself independent of the direction in which the wind might blow. The architect had resisted him on that point, and he had undergone great trouble and expense to have the requisite flues constructed, but by this means new beauties had been developed.

Sonnenkamp now showed him the greater part of the house, through which electro-magnetic bell-wires ran in every direction. The stairs were richly carpeted, everywhere were costly candelabra, and in the chambers broad double-beds.

Everything was arranged with elegance and taste, a truly chaste elegance and refined taste, where gold, marble, and silk contributed to the artistic decoration, with no overloading of ornament, and with a preservation of the appearance of home-like comfort. The furniture was not standing about like things looking for some fitting place, but every piece was adapted to the building itself, and seemed fixed, and at home; and yet the arrangement had this peculiar feature, that all the furniture appeared waiting for the inmates to come and occupy it, and not placed there to be gazed at by them in passing to and fro.

The heavy silk curtains, hanging in thick folds, were matched with the carpets; the large clocks in all the saloons were ticking, and the delicate works of art on the mantles and brackets were tastefully arranged. But it was plainly to be seen that this ar-

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rangement gave no physiognomical indication of the character of the owner, but was only the tasteful skill which every good upholsterer supplies to order; and, above all, one felt the absence of anything like an heir-loom. Eric could not rid himself of the impression that the persons here lived in their own house as if it were a hired one, and it seemed to him that Roland was following him, and that he must enter into the soul of the boy, who was already aware that some day he would call all this his own.

Sonnenkamp declared that he thought it contemptible for people to embellish their houses with mediæval furniture, or the imitation of that, while it answered the purpose neither of ornament nor of comfort. When Eric replied to him, that Goethe had expressed the same thing, Sonnenkamp answered: "That is very pleasant to me. I think that Goethe understood life."

He uttered this in a very condescending tone, as much as to say, that any one must esteem himself fortunate to have Herr Sonnenkamp recognise his worth.

On the north side of the house in the large saloon, covered with a red Persian carpet, was a half-octagon recess, in the middle of which stood a handsome malachite table surrounded by fixed chairs.

Four large windows, or rather four single panes of glass six feet in height, gave a free outlook; and in the spaces between the windows tablets of marble were inserted, half way up, on which were sculptured the four parts of the "Day" of Rietschel. The ceiling was ornamented with fine stucco-work, from which a silver lamp seemed to fly forth, rather than to hang down, for it took the form of a flying Cupid of bronze, holding a torch in his hand, and this torch, as Sonnenkamp immediately illustrated, could be lighted as a gas-burner.

"Only here," he said smiling, "do I have works of art, insomuch as I would neither deceive myself nor others — I have no taste for creative art. You, as the son of a Professor of Æsthetics, perhaps consider this very barbarous?"

"Not at all, only honest; and I think you are so far entitled to do as you think best."

"It is a duty for every one to be honest, and there is no choice in the matter."

"Pardon me if I have expressed myself badly. I mean, that even the realm of art is not free from rival claims; and he who has such a manifest gift for landscape-gardening, ought to be content with that, and can refrain from expressing himself in any other art."

Sonnenkamp smiled. This man, he thought, knows always how to come down on his feet.

He led his guest into the music-saloon. It had no gilding nor satin, only a centre-piece on the ceiling, and sea-green hangings on the walls. In the niches made by two small chimneys were brown, stuffed damask seats and sofas. This saloon seemed to be continually waiting for a social company, either moving about, or quietly seated.

Sonnenkamp smiled when Eric said that he was pleased to see the music-saloon so unadorned. The plain white had a sunshiny appearance, as if the sun lingered on the walls, and the eye was not attracted to any particular object, so that one could listen all the more attentively, only one sense being called into activity.

Sonnenkamp was yet more and more delighted; and when Eric inquired, "Which one of your family is musical?" he answered, —

"This saloon is intended for my daughter."

"Wonderful," said Eric; "yonder in the garden the upturned seat, and here the music-saloon, is expecting her."

Sonnenkamp, as he often did, took his under-lip between his fore-finger and thumb; he appeared to be either intending to say something, or wishing to keep something back.

"As we are talking about my daughter, I will just show you her room," he said suddenly, opening a side-door.

They entered a little apartment, in which the Venetian blinds were down. Sonnenkamp at once drew them entirely up. The prospect extended over the long vine-arbor and beyond the Rhine. The room was plain, but all was extremely pretty. A number of photographs, wreathed with blue ribbon into a circle, in the centre of which was a large picture of the pope, hung upon the wall. The white curtains of the white bed, now drawn back, allowed a beautifully carved ivory crucifix on the wall to be seen, while below it hung a neatly framed colored engraving, a sort of diploma, admitting Hermanna, styled Manna Sonnenkamp, into the band of good children.

A writing-table, a small book-shelf, tasteful chairs, everything showed that here was the abode of a maiden who quietly lived within herself, occupied chiefly with religious meditations. In the chamber itself there seemed to be the hovering spirit of prayer, and one involuntarily looked round

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to see the maiden herself come in, with those large childlike eyes immediately cast down at beholding her sanctuary intruded upon.

Eric's glance became fixed upon a handsome chimney-piece of green marble, whose semi-circular edge was bordered with living ivy, while the entire chimney-place was filled with flowers and growing plants. No flower-pots were to be seen, for they were skilfully concealed; it was all a mysterious growth of leaves and flowers.

"Does that please you?" Sonnenkamp asked. "Yes, my daughter always has the chimney-place filled with flowers in summer, and I think that Fräulein Perini has continued the practice in memory of her."

Eric continued to stare at the plants; and he fancied that he could read something of the character of the maiden who in summer kept the fire-place covered with flowers. Here Sonnenkamp laid a heavy hand on his shoulder, and said: —

"Are you entirely honest? You have not come here on my son's account, but on my daughter's."

"I do not comprehend," Eric replied.

"Were you not at the convent? Have you not seen my daughter?"

"Yes, both; but I had not the most remote knowledge of you, or your daughter, or your son."

"I believe it. But have you not conceived the idle fancy, that by taking up your abode in my house, you may perhaps win the affections of my daughter?"

"I thank you for this directness," Eric responded, "and I will use equal directness in my reply. I should consider it the misfortune of my life, if I should have the feeling of love towards your daughter."

"Towards my daughter? Why so?"

"Because I should esteem it a misfortune to love a maiden of such great wealth, without taking into view her Catholic opinions. I would never marry so rich a girl, and I would let my heart break before I would do it. I now beseech you — it is not entirely impossible that mistrust, by and by, may be awakened from this source — I beseech you, openly and directly, not to give me this situation in your family. It is better; I have been this short time your guest, and I thank you for your great kindness."

"Young man, you remain. I believe you, and I trust you. I thank you for teaching me to have confidence again in a human being, and to believe in a human being. You remain! Give me your hand — you remain! We will settle all quietly. Moreover, my daughter is — and I give you here the best testimony of my confidence — my daughter is as good as betrothed to the Baron von Pranken. Now come into my own work-room."

They entered it. Everything here was arranged with a special attention to convenience. For every frame of mind, and every season of the year, for solitude and for society, chairs, tables, and sofas were disposed everywhere for comfort, as much as one room could contain. There was a vast space, and yet a homelike seclusion; and this south side was admirably situated for a view of the landscape. Here could be seen, outside, the smooth beeches and plane-trees, which hid from view the bare-looking vineyards, and suffered the eye to rest upon the summits of the wooded heights; and directly in front of the balcony window there was a full view of the ruins of the castle, which, as Eric had already heard, was being rebuilt by the order of Herr Sonnenkamp, and under the special supervision of the major.

A single, beautiful painting hung here; it was a life-sized portrait of Roland, in his seventh year. The boy sat upon an overturned antique column, his hand upon the head of a splendid Newfoundland dog, and gazing into the distance.

A large arm-chest stood here with weapons of all sorts.

While Eric was looking about, Sonnenkamp shoved back two doors which were let into the walls, and he led the way into what he called his library. No books were to be seen, nothing but great boxes, vessels of porcelain and clay, as in a well-arranged apothecary's shop; and Sonnenkamp explained that these contained seeds from all the different parts of the earth.

From the seed-room a special stair-case led into the garden, and this stair-case was entirely grown over with the Chinese honeysuckle, which was now in full bloom with its clusters of blue papilionaceous flowers. Sonnenkamp conducted his guest back into the large work-room, and there said that it had, formerly, been his desire that Roland should have an inclination to enter upon the active life which he himself had now retired from. He spoke of trade. Eric was amazed at the vast, comprehensive glance which Sonnenkamp took of the business of the world: for him there was no isolated activity, no isolated product; one part of the world subsisted only through another; and the whole earth was for him one great market-place, where iron, wool, tobacco, and grain received his attention at the same time, and whether in Sweden, Scotland, the East Indies, or Havana, were brought to one common warehouse.

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Sonnenkamp seemed to be desirous, today, to compensate Eric for his unreserved communication, and Eric was astonished at the broad and strong grasp of the man's view, so that all his schemes were well calculated and sure of success; this vast power of insight was visible in all his talk. He had seen the wide world with that keen-sightedness characteristic of the English and Americans, who, of all nations, consume the smallest number of spectacles. He seized hold of the main features, without burdening himself with the incidental, and without being hindered by any afterthought; he described with great objectivity what he had seen in foreign lands, as well as what he had done in his own.

Sonnenkamp was well aware of the impression he had made upon Eric, and nodded, smiling, when the latter expressed his opinion how grand it must be not only to possess, but also to acquire and to be.

"Reflect seriously upon this," Sonnenkamp said,—"what would you make, and what am I to make, of Roland? You have seen so much," he added with a look of elation, "that you would not seek to change me and my family, if you should undertake the education of my son."

This last remark dissipated, to a certain extent, the deep impression which Sonnenkamp had made upon Eric. The whole appeared a premeditated affair.

A servant came to inform Herr Sonnenkamp that Herr von Pranken wished to take leave of him.

CHAPTER XIII.

DEVIL GETTING WONTED.

PRANKEN'S horse stood saddled in the court, and Pranken himself was walking up and down, snapping his riding-whip. In exceedingly good spirits, and in a very amiable mood, he hastened to meet Sonnenkamp, saying that he must take leave of him. There was a tone of bantering politeness in their manner towards each other. When Sonnenkamp remarked that Pranken was always surprising one, never saying that he was going away until the very moment of starting, Pranken answered, with mock modesty, that he was sure that he must in that way meet the approval of his friend Sonnenkamp, for nothing was more disagreeable, and made life more insipid and dull, than a constant talking over and discussion and cooking up of plans; he shot the hare, and left it to be dressed by the artists of the kitchen.

Pranken said all that with his usual rattling manner, as he twisted the end of his light moustache. He took a cool leave of Eric, saying that he hoped to find him still there on his return from a short journey.

"Should you, however, leave before I come back, have the kindness to present my respects to the gracious—" he paused a moment, then added, "to the Professor's lady, your mother."

He had taken off his glove when he said good-bye to Sonnenkamp, but drew it on again before he held out his hand to Eric, and it was evident that he did so intentionally. This coldness was rather agreeable to Eric; a part of his debt of gratitude was removed as Pranken treated him more distantly, and they could perhaps be more harmonious and independent when they were thrown together.

Pranken called Sonnenkamp aside, and said, though he certainly had recommended the young scholar—haughtily emphasizing this expression—he would beg him not to conclude any hasty engagement without making a strict examination himself.

"Herr Baron," replied Sonnenkamp, "I am a merchant—" he made a watchful pause before continuing,—"and I know what recommendations are, and how often one is forced to give them. I assure you that you are free from all responsibility, and as to the examination myself—I am a merchant, Herr Baron—" again the wary pause,—"the young man is the seller, and a seller always has to lay himself open, and to show what he is, more fully than the buyer, especially here, where the seller is offering himself for sale."

Pranken smiled, and said that was the deepest diplomacy. He went to his horse, vaulted nimbly into the saddle, and set off at a gallop. Sonnenkamp called after him that he must see whether the magnolia in the convent yard was thriving; he waved his hat to show that he understood, and rode away at full speed.

"A charming, agreeable young man! always bright and merry," Sonnenkamp said, as he looked after Pranken; and he went on to remark, at some length, on his constant light-heartedness.

Eric was silent. There seemed to prevail in this circle into which he was introduced, a perpetual commenting and remarking upon others. He knew Pranken, he knew this everlasting galloping style of utterance, which is always so extremely animated, and even becomes enthusiastic when the conversation can be turned into an emulous contest of raillery. But this galloping genius had a deep foundation of insincerity, for it was not possible to be strained up every moment to this pitch; it

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could only be the result of violent tension, which must perpetually make a show of energy, and in this constant effort the soul must, consciously or unconsciously, put on a false appearance.

Eric quietly listened to his remaining statements, and only when Sonnenkamp asked him whether he did not think that the man, who had from his youth been conscious of a superior rank, could alone attain to this regal and sportive mastery over life, only then did he answer, that no fair province of life was shut out from the middle class.

Sonnenkamp nodded very acquiescingly. His saddle-horse was now brought to him, and he immediately mounted and rode off.

Eric went in search of Roland, and found him with his dogs. The boy desired that Eric should at once select one of them for himself. "And only think," he added, "a day-laborer just informs me that the dwarf has received a bite from Devil. Served the stupid fellow exactly right, for trying to do what he wasn't fit to do."

Eric was shocked. Was it possible that a young heart could already be so stony? He laid down to Roland at length how inhuman it was to regard a human being as a mere puppet, and to have no further concern about him, after one has had his sport out of him. His whole heart was moved with feeling as he spoke. Roland disdainfully threw back his head.

"Why do you make no reply to me?" Eric asked.

"Ah! I had no idea that you would preach to me like all the rest."

Attracted by the beauty of the boy, and his bold spirit, Eric had come to the determination to devote himself to him, and now, for an instant, he experienced a revulsion of feeling, but only to devote himself with fresh earnestness to his resolve. He would soften and thaw out this soul, naturally hard, or made so by the training it had received.

Roland went up quietly to Eric, and requested him to ride out with him. They rode together to the village. But Roland could not be induced to visit the dwarf, whom Eric found lying on the bed, moaning and groaning. When he arrived at the house of the huntsman, he did not find Roland, who had gone with Devil into the woods upon the height.

The huntsman greeted Eric less submissively; he lifted his cap, indeed, but only to cock it a little one side; he approached him in that familiar way so common on the upper Rhine, where it always seems as if one would touch glasses, and make himself friendly with you.

"Captain," he asked, "have you settled matters?"

"No."

"May I be permitted to say something to you?"

"If it is something good, why not?"

"That's just as one takes it. That one, down there"—he pointed with his thumb back to the villa—"that one is buying up the whole Rhine-land. But see you, that fox-hound there—"

"Stop," at once exclaimed Eric, proceeding to point out, in a very decisive manner, that he had no right to speak so to him, and about another person.

Eric was aware that he had not properly preserved his own dignity, or this man would not have been able to approach him so familiarly; and he was now more severe in repelling this forwardness than he intended. The hunstman only puffed the more vigorously at his pipe, and then said,—

"Yes, yes, you are the one to seize the man down there by the throat, and I see that you are too smart for me. You wish to get off from thanking me; I want no thanks, and no pay."

He muttered to himself, that everything which came near the rich man was always spoilt.

Eric must undo somewhat the impression he had made, for the hunstman was the only one who could rival him in his influence over Roland. The hunstman took, in very good part, Eric's expressions of friendliness, but he remained silent. When Roland came back, Eric asked him nothing about his excursion to the woods, and told him nothing about the dwarf. It was Roland's place to ask him, but the boy said nothing, and they both rode back in silence.

Eric immediately caused himself to be announced to Herr Sonnenkamp, and informed him that he now felt compelled to assume a definite relation with Roland.

"You find Roland, then, an excellent youth?"

"He has great boldness, determination, and—I know that a father can only hear it with unwilling ears, but after your searching inquiries yesterday, I may be permitted to hope that you are sufficiently free to—"

"Certainly, certainly; only speak out."

"I find a degree of hard-heartedness, and a want of sympathy with the purely human, surprising at such an age;" and Eric related how Roland had deported himself in regard to the dwarf.

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A peculiar smile darted over Sonnenkamp's features, as he asked,—

"And do you feel confident that you can make a corrupted nature noble?"

"Pardon me, I said nothing about a corrupted nature; I should say, rather, that Roland is just now changing his voice, in a spiritual sense, and one cannot judge what tone it will take; but so much the more necessity is there for care in the kind of influence exerted."

"And what is your opinion of Roland's talents?"

"I think that he is not superior to the average. He has a good natural understanding, and a quick comprehension, but persistency,—*that* is indeed very questionable, and I have already observed that he goes along well enough a certain distance, then comes to a standstill, and will pursue the thought no farther. I am not yet very clear in regard to this mental characteristic; if it cannot be changed for the better, I should fear that Roland would be unhappy, for he would experience no abiding satisfaction, nor would he feel the delight, nor the obligation, of perseverance. Yet this is, perhaps, drawing too fine a thread."

"No, no, you are right. I place no reliance upon my son's stability of character; he only lives from hand to mouth. It is a bore to him to do anything of which he cannot see the direct result.

"That is the way with children. But such children never make sterling men; therefore I wanted Roland to love plants, as he would then be obliged to learn that there was something which can at no time be neglected or forgotten."

"I am rejoiced," Eric replied, "that you here remind me of the most vital points. First of all, the rich man, and the son of a rich man, like the prince and the son of a prince, have only subservient friends. Against my will I have become Roland's play-fellow, and so the subsequent serious work will be interfered with."

"Is it impossible then, to combine work and play?"

"I hope to do so. But the necessity of work must be recognized." Eric continued silent, and Sonnenkamp asked,—

"You have still another point?"

"Most certainly, and it is this. As I have already suggested, Roland must acquire a steadfast relation to external things, an intimate bond of union with them, as then only will he be at home in the world. He who has no recollections of childhood, no deep attachment to that which has transpired around him, is cut off from the very fountain-head of genial and hearty affection. Question yourself, and you will find—your return to Germany fully proves it—that the heartfelt, endearing recollections of childhood were the very sustenance, what one may perhaps call the spiritual mother's milk, of your deepest soul."

Sonnenkamp winced at these words, and Eric added,—

"Homelessness is hurting the soul of your son."

"Homelessness?" Sonnenkamp exclaimed in astonishment.

His face quivered for an instant, and his athletic strength seemed eager to make some outward demonstration, but he restrained it within the bounds of forced composure, asking,—

"Do I rightly apprehend you? Homelessness?"

"That is what I think. The inner life of the child needs training, that it may cling to something; a journey is, perhaps, not harmful to the soul of a child; at the best, it has little effect upon him. A child in travelling has no distinct impression from all the changes of the landscape; he takes delight in the locomotive at the station, and in the wind-mill on the hill. One fixed point in the soul anchors it firmly. I said that the human being ought to have an object to strive for, but permit me to add to that, that he must also have a fixed point of departure, and that is the home. You said, and I see it myself, that Roland takes no real delight in anything; and is not that owing to the fact that the boy is homeless, a child of hotels, with no tap-root in any place, and still more, no deep-seated impressions, no pictures in his memory which have become a portion of his very life, and to which he returns from all his wayward fancies? He told me that he had played in the Coliseum at Rome, in the Louvre at Paris, in Hyde-park at London, and on the lake of Geneva,—and now, living in Europe, yet always proudly conscious of being an American,—this causes—pardon me, I only ask the question—does this not cause a restlessness of spirit, which may be fatal to any growth?"

"I see," Sonnenkamp answered, leaning back his head, "you are an incarnate, or one might rather say, an insouled German, who runs over the whole world, in reality and in thought, and cajoles himself always with the self-complacent notion, 'I am so whole-souled, and that is more than the rest of you are.' Pah! I tell you that if I bestow anything of worth upon my child, I believe it will be just this, that he will be free from that sentimentality of a so-called settled home. The whistle of the locomo-

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tive scares away all the homesickness so tenderly pampered of old. We are in fact cosmopolites, and that is just the greatness of American civilization, that, not being rooted in the past, national limitations and rights of citizenship have no narrowing influence upon the soul. The home-attachment is an old nuisance and a prejudice. Roland is to become an untramelled man."

Eric was silent. After a considerable time, he said:—

"It is, perhaps, not beneficial, but tiresome, both to you and to me, to deal in generalities. I would only say, that however little calculated travelling may be to create an inner satisfaction, when there is no definite object to be attained that one can all along hold in view, much less can a life that has no special aim of action, thought, or enjoyment, confer any central peace. If Roland now had some special talent—"

"Do you find none at all in him?"

"I have discovered none as yet; and still it seems to me, that if he had been born under different circumstances, he would have made a serviceable lock-smith, or a good groom. I hope you do not misunderstand that—I consider it a guaranty for human equality, that what a man becomes, wholly or chiefly depends upon circumstances. Hundreds of judges would have become, under different circumstances, common laborers, and hundreds of common laborers would have become judges. As I said before, it is to me a direct proof of the universally diffused capacities of human beings, that only the few have the genius that absolutely demands a special work."

"I understand, I understand. And do you think that you can train a boy, of whom you have formed so low an opinion?"

"I have not a low opinion of Roland, neither of his head nor his heart. He seems to me not unsusceptible of love, but it is to him an enjoyment, not also a duty; he has the qualities belonging to the average of men not marked by any special characteristic, and those are entirely sufficient to form him, under judicious and proper direction, into a good and honorable man, happy himself, and able to make others happy. And I shall be very glad, in the meanwhile, if I am mistaken in attributing to Roland no special genius."

"I honor and value highly your great earnestness," Sonnenkamp interposed, "but I am just now in great haste. Inform Roland of your position."

He seemed out of humor, as he rolled his cigar from one corner of his mouth to the other, and busied himself with his papers, just as if Eric were no longer present.

Eric left the work-room of Sonnenkamp, and betook himself to Roland. He found the boy busily employed in chewing a piece of half-raw meat, and giving the chewed morsels to the lately broken-in dog; the huntsman affirmed that that would attach the dog to him inseparably. Eric looked on a while, and then requested Roland to send the dog away, as he had something to say to him.

"Can't the dog stay with us?"

Eric made no reply, for he saw that he must first settle whether he or the dog had the deepest hold. On his casting a sharp look again upon Roland, the boy said, "Come, Devil, wait here at the door," and returning, he exclaimed, "There, now go on."

Eric took Roland's hand, and informed him that he had come to be his tutor. Roland leaned his handsome head upon his partly closed hand, gazing at the speaker fixedly with his large, restless, glowing eyes.

"I knew it," he said at last.

"And who told you?"

"The huntsman and Joseph."

"And why did you say nothing to me about it?"

Roland made no answer to this, only looking at the speaker, as if he would say, "I can wait." He only once removed his gaze, when Eric added, that he had wished to try first whether he was adapted to the family. Roland still remained silent. The dog scratched at the door; Roland looked towards it, but did not venture to open it. Eric opened it. The dog sprang in, crouched down before Roland, and then went to Eric and licked his hands; he seemed to be a mysterious messenger, a silent yet eloquent interpreter between them.

"He likes you too!" Roland cried out in childish delight.

These were the only words spoken by the boy. Suddenly springing up, he threw himself upon Eric's breast, where he was held in a firm embrace; the dog barked as if he must express himself.

"We will be true to each other," Eric exclaimed, unclasping his arms; "I had a brother of your age, and you are to be my younger brother."

Roland, without speaking, held Eric's right hand between both of his.

"Now let us at once begin our life, fresh and bright."

"Yes," replied Roland, "we'll make Devil fetch something out of the water; he does it splendidly."

"No, my dear brother, we will go to work. Let us see what you have learned."

Eric had noticed particularly, that Ro-

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land, who was deficient in every other branch of knowledge, had a pretty good acquaintance with geography. He tested him in this, and Roland was highly pleased to be able to give him accurate answers. They gradually passed to the consideration of other studies, and then Roland appeared confused, and for Latin he had a hatred amounting to a personal hostility.

"We will quietly study what is necessary," Eric said consolingly, "and then we will ride, drive, shoot, fish, and row."

This prospect cheered the boy very much, and when the clock struck in the tower, he suddenly observed, —

"In one hour Herr von Pranken will be with Manna. I can learn to ride, fence, and shoot, as well as Herr von Pranken, don't you think I can?"

"Certainly you can."

"I sent a letter, too, to Manna by Herr von Pranken."

"What language did you write it in?"

"English, of course. Ah! it just occurs to me, — all speak so highly of your mother, let your mother come too; she might live out there in our small, vine-covered house."

The boy could say no more, for Eric lifted him up, pressed him to his breast, and kissed him. The boy had uttered what at first sight had flashed through his own soul, and now it was evident that he bestowed gladly, loved to confer benefits, and to contrive pleasure for others; his hard-heartedness towards the dwarf disappeared as a mere superficial blemish.

A servant came and announced that dinner was served. Holding each other by the hand, Roland and Eric went to the dining-room.

CHAPTER XIV.

A RIVAL.

The dinner was as ceremonious as it had been the day before. Frau Ceres, who appeared again at table, betrayed by no look or word that she had conversed so confidentially with Eric; she addressed, frequently, some brief remark to him; but again all were occupied in urging her to eat something. Eric wondered at the patience with which Sonnenkamp did this again and again.

After dinner, while they were taking coffee, Sonnenkamp observed to Eric in a careless way, that a new applicant had presented himself, who brought the highest recommendation from Roland's last tutor, the candidate Knopf. He gave Eric to understand that they did not receive every one at once to dinner, and ordered Joseph to introduce the stranger.

A slim, sunburnt man entered. He was introduced to the company. Eric was introduced by the title of Captain, Doctor being suffered temporarily to rest in peace. The stranger, whose name was Professor Crutius, had been a fellow-student with the candidate Knopf, had seen a good deal of the world, and, finally, for several years, had been professor in the military school at West Point, near New York.

He gave this information with great ease, but in rather a harsh tone of voice.

Sonnenkamp seemed to have reserved this entertainment for the dessert, to allow the two applicants to engage in a tilt with each other, while quietly smoking his cigar. He was very shrewd in finding the points where they could attack each other, but he was not not a little surprised that Eric immediately laid down his arms; expressing his thanks to the stranger, he said that he envied his rich experience in life, and his wide survey of the world, while he himself had, to his regret, been confined to the limited circle of the Principality and to the world of books.

The stranger had made the discovery very soon that Fräulein Perini was the hair-spring in the watchwork of this household, and he found that they had some reminiscences in common. Crutius had accompanied an American family to Italy, and had gone from thence to the New World.

In a manner showing candor and experience, he described the characteristics of an American boy of the upper class, and how such a boy must be managed. Without directly pointing it out, this description was evidently intended for Roland, who sat gazing at the stranger.

Eric, standing with Sonnenkamp by the balcony-railing, which he grasped tightly in his hands, said that he himself was not sufficiently prepared, and that the stranger would be, probably, the most fitting person.

Sonnenkamp made no reply, puffing out quickly cloud after cloud of smoke into the air.

"Magnanimity," he thought to himself. "Magnanimity, — nothing but smoke and vapor."

The stranger was very zealously engaged in conversation with Frau Ceres and Fräulein Perini. Roland went to his father, and said, in a voice as determined as it was low, —

"Send him away; I don't want him."

"Why not?"

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"Because I have Herr Eric, and because Herr Knopf has sent him."

"Go to your own room; you have nothing to say about this," Eric ordered.

The boy stared at him, and went.

Eric declared to the father that Roland's instinctive feeling was just; the bitterness against his former teacher he could not at all judge of, but it was evident that the boy wanted to be received by some entirely unprejudiced stranger.

Sonnenkamp was surprised at this kindly appreciation on Eric's part, especially when he went on to state how unpleasant a thing it must be for the boy to be transferred in this way from one hand to another.

The stranger, in the meanwhile, had asked Fräulein Perini whether Sonnenkamp had any relatives, whether that had always been his name, and whether he received many letters. He touched upon one and another point in his conversation, evidently to reconnoitre the state of feeling entertained by the family concerning America; and when Sonnenkamp, with great energy, asserted that he should like a dictator for America, who would put to rout the rascality there, Crutius said, that there were very many in the New World who really cherished the conviction and desire that America would establish a monarchy, but didn't dare to say so.

Sonnenkamp nodded to himself, and whistled again inaudibly.

"Where did you put up?" he abruptly inquired of the stranger.

Crutius named an inn in the village.

"There you are very well quartered."

The stranger's countenance changed for an instant. He had evidently expected that his luggage would be sent for, and that he would be received as a guest in the house.

Sonnenkamp thanked him very courteously for the call, and requested him to give his address in full, so that he might be written to if there should be occasion. The stranger's hand trembled as he took out his well-worn pocket-book, and gave his card. He took leave with formal politeness.

Sonnenkamp requested Eric to escort his fellow-teacher a part of the way, and handed him several gold pieces, which he was to give to the needy-looking man in a suitable manner.

"Is this friendly confidence, or is it expected as a service?" Eric asked himself, as he went after the stranger.

He overtook him near the park-wall, and when Eric represented himself to be also a teacher, the countenance of the professor changed, and he exclaimed: —

"Ah! a teacher then, and perhaps my competitor?"

Eric answered in the affirmative.

Crutius looked sour at this; he had been gratified at the friendly encouragement of the captain, whom he took to be an inmate of the family, and he was grateful to him for the praise he had given him; but now he turned out to be a teacher too! He gnashed his teeth a little over this mistake.

Eric tendered him the present of gold with great delicacy, putting himself on an equality with the stranger, making known his own poverty, and declaring how impossible it often was not to accept from those who had means.

"Ha! ha!" the stranger laughed out. "He knows me; he wishes to put me under obligation and release himself!"

Eric said that he did not understand such expressions.

"Indeed!" the stranger said, laughing. "So innocence with a captain's rank allows itself also to be bought? The whole world is nothing but an old rag-shop. What matter! The den where the tiger devours his prey is very fine and very tasty! paint and tapestry can cover up a good deal! I ask your pardon, I have taken wine this morning, and I am not used to it. Well, hand it over! My most humble compliments to Villa Eden! Ha! ha! a very nice name!"

Without adding a word more, the stranger, grasping tightly the gold, touched his hat, and walked off at a rapid pace.

Eric returned to Sonnenkamp in a meditative mood. Sonnenkamp invited him to be seated, in a very friendly manner, asking, —

"Did he take the money?"

Eric nodded.

"And of course, with hardly a thank you?"

Eric said that the man had acknowledged, of his own accord, that he had been drinking wine that morning, and was not used to it.

Pointing to a great packet of letters, Sonnenkamp said that they were all applications for the advertised situation. He expatiated very merrily upon the great number of persons who depend upon some wind-fall or other; if one should only open a honey-pot, suddenly bees, wasps, and golden-flies appear, nothing of which had been seen before. Then he continued: —

"I can give you a contribution to your knowledge of men."

"Anything about Herr Crutius?"

"No; of your very much be-pitied dwarf. It is really refreshing to find such a charm-

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ing piece of rascality. I have known for a long time how smart he was in stealing the black wood-vetch from the hill above; but now the bite received in training the dog is nothing but a lie. I have already informed Roland of it, and I am glad that he can become acquainted so early with the vileness and deceitfulness of men."

"You will not keep the dwarf any longer in your employment, I suppose?"

"Certainly I shall. I am delighted that the droll little man has so much rascality. It is a perfect satisfaction to play with the villainy and roguery of people, and I should like to have half a dozen such on hand, so as to teach Roland how to deal with chaps of that stamp."

"I would rather not be able to give him that instruction," said Eric.

"It is not for you to do that; you are here for something else."

Eric left Sonnenkamp's room, greatly depressed.

A servant informed him that Roland was waiting for him at the river-bank; he went there, and Roland invited him to take a sail with him on the Rhine. He unfastened the pretty boat from the shore, and rowed expertly out into the stream; it was now a dark green, and the islands above, with their dense foliage, seemed to be growing out of a soil of liquid emerald.

A fresh breeze rippled the surface; Roland was happy that he could unfurl the sail, and showed himself skilful in his mastery over the elements. Every movement was so graceful that Eric took great delight in looking at him.

Eric was a novice on the water, and he was glad to give Roland the satisfaction of instructing him, and of showing him how the boat is made to turn, and to go in any direction. There was a joyous tone in Roland's voice that Eric had never remarked before.

And while they were sailing along with a full breeze, the splashing waves striking against the boat, Roland spoke of the candidate Knopf, who first made him really at home upon the water. Knopf could row, sail, steer, and make the boat describe a circle in the water, better than the best boatman. Yes, better than the boatman's wife even, a large, powerful woman, who now called out to him as she steered a large boat made fast to a tow-boat, while her husband, a not less powerful form, leaned against the mast.

Roland, steering towards the tow-boat, made fast to the boat which the woman was managing. She chatted with him without looking round, for she must keep the exact course. When they had gone far enough, Roland unfastened the boat, and sailed back with the current.

He gave a humorous account of the helmswoman's rule over her husband, but Eric led the conversation to the candidate Knopf. Roland was not inclined to say anything more about him, nor to speak of his previous tutors, who were evidently regarded by him with as much indifference as is a yesterday's waiter at a hotel, or a discharged servant. Who will ask about people whom they have dismissed? It was only apparent, from some words dropped by Roland, that this candidate must have had a warm affection for his pupil.

Mention was made, also, of the dwarf, and Roland took it very coolly that he had turned out a rascal, for he regarded all poor people as rascals.

Eric had gained in this sail a new and deeper knowledge of his pupil; pity was now added to the love he felt for the boy, who had so early acquired a contempt for the world, and who appeared to have no person and no thing to which he clung inseparably, and the thought of which gave him new inspiration. Only with his sister did he seem to have any real bond of affection, for as they were approaching the villa, he said: —

"Just as I am now walking with you, Manna is walking with Herr von Pranken. I think that you and Manna, when she comes, will also be good friends."

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BOOK III. — CHAPTER I.

THE SUBTERRANEAN CALL.

A FRAGRANT strawberry glistens on the ground, beautiful to the eye, and luscious to the taste. If there were some method of seeing, or even of hearing, what was going on at the root of the plant, we might perhaps be able to discern how the ammonia, homely, and of very pungent odor, turned up conceitedly its nose, as much as to say, What indeed would all this be without me?

The potash, on the other hand, brightly glistening and sweet-smelling, is under no necessity of saying anything, for its very appearance says already, All the scientific men of the upper world speak on my behalf.

And the hard, silicious earth, in its comfortable repose, might be understood to say, I am an aboriginal inhabitant, and what do these transient fellows want? To-day here, and to-morrow gone; I have already lived through a great deal, — everything goes by fashion.

The maggot-worm grubs at the root, blinking with its cunning eyes, and thinks, The rest are happy in rendering service, but I — I fatten myself. The earth-worm rolls itself along in a proud feeling of triumph that it can go through the streets and water-courses, whereon everything is moving hither and thither. A mole, that has nestled in the neighborhood, lies in wait for the moment when the maggot-worm is taking a little nap, after its surfeit, and gobbles it up.

Such are the manifold operations of life and movement down there at the roots, and such also are those in the servants' room of Villa Eden above.

Herr Sonnenkamp has a wise rule, although many consider it hard-hearted, that all his servants must be unmarried. They receive good wages, are in want of nothing, but make no pretension to family life. A beggar never comes into the well-kept garden, for he would disturb its comfortable serenity. He receives alms, at the entrance, from the keeper of the lodge, and the old cook oftentimes complains that the remnants of food, which might nourish many a hungry one, go so utterly to waste.

It is noon. They take their meals here, long before the table of their master above is set. Two grooms and a third coachman, who keep watch in the stables, eat by themselves in silence, for they must relieve the others.

The superintendent here below is the head-cook, dressed in light clothes, and called for shortness, "the chief;" of a burly and portly figure, with a beardless face, and a large hawk-nose, he plays here the marquis. His German is a sort of jargon, but he rules over the subordinate cook and kitchen-maids, with absolute sway.

The watchmen have dined. A long table is laid for more than a dozen persons, and they come in one after another.

The first who makes his appearance, or, rather, the one to whom the first entrance is conceded, is the head-coachman, Bertram, with a powerful, gigantic form. He has a great red beard, parted in two waving masses coming to a peak, with an embroidered waistcoat covering his hips, and over it a striped blue and white jacket, with just a slight badge of distinction from that of the other coachmen.

With a greeting to the whole corps of servants, Bertram seats himself at the head of the table with Joseph on his right, and the head-gardener on his left. Next to this one, a little man, with seamed face and rapidly glancing eyes, takes a seat; this is Lutz, the courier. Then the rest seat themselves according to their rank, the stable-boys and the men working in the garden being placed at the lower end of the table.

The first female cook, a special favorite of Fräulein Perini, insisted strenuously upon grace being said before dinner. Bertram, the travelled coachman, a decided free-thinker, always busied himself during the blessing with his great embroidered waistcoat, which he drew proudly down over his hips. Joseph folded his hands, but did not move his lips; the rest prayed silently.

No sooner was the soup removed, and a little wine sipped, — for the servants had their wine every day, — than Bertram started the talk, and upon a very definite topic.

"I was just waiting to see whether Lieutenant Dournay would recognise me; I belonged to his battery."

"Indeed!" Joseph delightedly chimed in. "He was right popular, I'm certain?"

Bertram did not consider it incumbent upon him to give a direct reply. He only said that he could never have believed that Herr Dournay would ever become a servant.

"Servant?"

"Yes, a servant like us; and because he knows something of books, a tutor."

Joseph smiled in a melancholy way, and took great pains to bring the table over to

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a correct view. First he praised the celebrated father of Eric, who had received at least twenty decorations; and his mother, who belonged to the nobility; and he was very happy to say that Captain Dournay understood all about the sciences, and, to throw at their heads the very hardest names which he could get hold of, — Anthropology, Osteology, Archæology, and Petrifactology — all these the captain was master of; he was a complete university in himself. But he did not succeed in convincing the company that Eric was anything else than a servant.

The head-gardener said, in a high-Prussian dialect: —

"Anyhow, he is a handsome man, and sits his horse well; but he don't know a thing about gardening."

Lootz, the courier, praised Eric for speaking good French and English, but of course, when it came to Russian, and Turkish, and Polish, the learned gentleman didn't understand them; for Lutz himself, as a journeyman tailor, having made the tour of all countries, understood all languages. He had attended formerly Fräulein von Pranken, the present Countess Wolfsgarten, and two English ladies, on their travels; now he acted as courier for Herr Sonnenkamp on his journeys, and was idle the rest of the time, unless one calls work the carrying of the letter-bag to and from the railroad station, and the playing of the guitar, which the little man practised a good deal, with the accompaniment of his own whistling. He had also a secret service.

There appeared to be a tacit agreement at the table, that they should make no reply to anything that Lutz said; he only received a smile from the second female cook, with whom he had a tender but not acknowledged relation.

A man with Sarmatian features and a Polish accent claimed for Herr von Pranken the credit of having brought the man into the house. Bertram gave Joseph a slight nudge, and proceeded to praise Herr von Pranken in the most eulogistic terms, while Joseph winked slyly, as if he would say, Just so; this shows again that the Pole is in the secret service of Herr von Pranken.

Now they speculated whether Herr von Pranken would take up his abode in the house after his marriage with Manna, for this event was regarded as a settled thing.

A gardener, who stammered a little, remarked that it was said at the village inn, that Herr Sonnenkamp had been a tailor. All laughed, and the stuttering gardener, who was the special butt of the circle, was more and more spurred on to talk, and ranted till he became blue in the face. Bertram, taking both waves of his long beard in his hands, exclaimed: —

"If any one should tell me that, I'd show him how his teeth taste."

"Just let people talk," said soothingly the head-gardener, with a smile in advance at his own wisdom, as he added, "As soon as a man gets on in the world he must make up his mind to be slandered."

One of the hostlers gave an account of a scuffle which had taken place between them and the servants of the so-called Wine-count, who reproached them with being the servants of a man whom nobody knew anything about, — who he was, or where he came from; and that one of them had gone so far as to say that Frau Sonnenkamp was a purchased slave.

The secret, and, in fact, not very edifying history of several families was now related, until the stout female cook cried out at last: —

"Do stop that talk! My mother used to say, that

> 'Whether houses be great or small,
> There lies a stone before them all.'"

The second gardener, a lean, thin man, with a peaked face, called the squirrel, who often had prayers with the pious people of the neighborhood, began a very evangelical discourse about evil speaking. He had, originally, been a gardener, then a policeman in a northern capital, where Sonnenkamp became acquainted with him, and placed him back again in his first occupation, employing him frequently in commissions that called for special circumspection.

An ancient kitchen-maid, who sat apart, holding in her lap the plate from which she was eating, cried suddenly: —

"You may say what you please, the gentleman who has just come marries the daughter of the family. Just bear that in mind. Mark my words. He hasn't come for the young gentleman, but for the young lady. There was once on a time a prince and a princess in the castle, and the prince put on a servant's dress — yes, laugh away, but it is just so."

Joseph and Bertram exchanged glances full of meaning.

Now there was a general joking. Every one wished to have his fortune told by old Kate. The courier made fun of superstitious people, but assumed a very forced smile when Bertram called out: —

"Yes, indeed, the tailors are all enlightened, they don't believe in hell."

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There was no end to the laughing now. Suddenly a voice sounded from the ceiling: —

"Bertram is to put the horses to the glass-carriage, and Joseph to come up."

The company at the table broke up; the hostlers went to the stables, where they smoked their pipes, the gardeners to the park and the green-houses. Joseph told two servants to set the dinner-table, and there was stillness under ground. Only the kettles bubbled and hissed, and the chief surveyed with lofty mien the progress of his work.

An hour later, Lootz received the letters which he was to carry to the station, and, in a very casual and innocent way, related that the new tutor had as adherents in the house, Bertram, who was formerly stationed in his battery, and Joseph, who considered himself committed to him as coming from the University. It had never been said in so many words that Lutz was to be a spy over the servants, but it was understood, as a matter of course, between him and his master.

CHAPTER II.

A SUNDAY FILLED OUT.

Eric had wished to write a letter to his mother out of fairy-land, when he rode as if under a spell of enchantment through the wood, where all was music, fragrance, and brightness. Yes, then! It was only a few days ago, and yet it seems as if years had elapsed. How much in these few days had Eric thought, seen, experienced! The letter is an entirely different one.

On Sunday there was a change in the household arrangements, no common breakfast being served. When Eric met Sonnenkamp in the garden, the latter asked him if he would go with them to church. Eric answered no, at once, adding in explanation, that by going he should be guilty of an act of hypocrisy; as a mark of respect for a confession not his own, he might perhaps be willing to go, but a different view would be taken of it.

Sonnenkamp looked at him in surprise. But this straight-forwardness seemed to have an effect upon him, for he said, —

"Good; one is at no loss to find out your opinion."

The tone was ambiguous, but Eric interpreted it favorably.

After all had gone to church, Eric sat alone, writing to his mother. He began by saying that he seemed to himself like Ulysses thrown upon a strange island; he had, indeed, no fellow-voyagers to take care of, but he had for companions many noble sentiments, and he must watch sharp lest they be turned into ——

Just as he was writing the word, he stopped; that was not the proper tone. He destroyed the sheet, and began again. He narrated, simply and briefly, the interview with Pranken, Clodwig, and Bella, saying that as the Homeric heroes were under the special protection of the gods, so to-day a different and better one was vouchsafed, and he was accompanied by the spirit and noble character of his parents. In speaking of Roland, he said that wealth had a peculiar power to excite the fancy, and a mighty energy in carrying out its purposes, for Roland had already removed her into the small, vine-covered house.

The bells were ringing in the village, and Eric wrote with flying speed about his conception of the noble vocation of guiding in the right path a human being, upon whom was conferred the great and influential power of wealth.

And now, mingled with the ringing of the bells, there came suddenly the recollection of that narrative in the Gospel of the rich young man coming to Jesus. He did not remember the precise question and answer, and he looked for a Bible in Roland's library, but there was no Bible there; yet it seemed as if he could go no farther, until he had become exactly acquainted with that incident.

He went down into the garden; there he came across the gardener, the so-called squirrel, who was very happy to be able to give an affirmative answer to the question whether he had a Bible. With words full of unction he brought one to Eric, who took it with him to his room.

He wrote no more, he read for a long time; then he sat there motionless, his head resting upon his left hand, which covered his eyes, until Roland returned from church, and laid down his prayer-book. As Eric grasped now the hand which had deposited the book, the inquiry darted through his soul, Wilt thou be able to give the youth a like firm trust as a compensation, if thou shouldest ——

His thoughts were interrupted, for Roland said, —

"You have procured a Bible, then?" With childish pleasure he informed him that, by means of the gardener, it had been reported all over the house. Eric felt obliged to declare to the boy that he held this book in high esteem, and thought there was no other to be compared with it, but that he had none of the customary ecclesiastical reverence for it.

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"Do you know this?" Eric asked, pointing to the passage about the rich young man.

Roland read it, and when Eric asked him what he thought of it, Roland only stared, for he had evidently not perceived the difficulty of the problem there enunciated. Eric avoided enlightening him now in regard to the meaning of the parable; he would wait. A seed-grain lies at first motionless in the earth, until it is stirred into activity by its own vital forces. Eric knew that at this moment such a seed-grain had fallen into the child's soul. He would bide quietly the time when it should germinate and spring up.

He complied with Roland's desire that he would go with him to meet the major, who came every Sunday to dinner. They walked for a while in the road under the nut-trees, and then up the hill through the vineyards. They saw, near a large open space where stakes only were standing, the Major, with whom we have already become acquainted at Wolfsgarten; he was to-day in full uniform, with all his badges.

Whilst the established nobility of the region were very reserved in their visits to the Sonnenkamp mansion, the Major was the banner of distinction to this household, Frau Ceres being especially delighted that a man with so many badges should devote himself to her in so friendly a way. Evil tongues, indeed, reported that the Major, in consideration of this attention to the ladies, and this Sunday display of his badges, received no trifling addition to his not very large pension, but this was pure scandal, for the Major, or rather Fräulein Milch, strenously refused to accept presents from any one in the region, nor would they allow themselves to be in any manner dependent.

The Major was very happy to see them both.

"Have you got him so soon?" said he to Eric. "Be sure and hold him by a tight rein."

And, pointing to the vineyard, he said: "Next season we shall have there — so Herr Sonnenkamp says — the first wine. Have you ever drunk virgin wine?"

Eric answered in the negative, and the Major delighted in being able to explain to him that the first product of a vineyard was so denominated.

The Major's gait was nothing but a perpetual plunge forward and a recovery of himself again; every two steps he stopped and looked round, always with a smile. He smiled upon every one he met. Why were people to be made unhappy because he has lost his toes? Why should they see a troubled countenance? He informed Eric that he had frozen his toes in the Russian campaign, and had been obliged to have them amputated; and he smiled very cheerfully, as he said: —

"Yes, truly our German proverb is right. Every one knows best himself where the shoe pinches."

He nodded his agreement with Eric, who made an application of the proverb to the various relations of life.

Then he asked Roland whether his mother had yet risen; for Frau Ceres made the no small sacrifice of getting up at nine o'clock, and, what will be considered a not much inferior one, of completing her toilet in a single hour, and going with the family to church. She always made up, therefore, for the lost sleep by going to bed again before dinner, and putting on afterwards, for the first time, her real Sunday apparel.

When they reached the level road, the architect met them, on his way also to dinner; he joined Eric, while Roland went with the Major. The men were all obliged to look at Roland's dogs, before they assembled in the balcony-saloon. They found the doctor and the priest already with Herr Sonnenkamp.

Eric had scarcely been introduced, when Frau Ceres appeared in splendid full dress.

The Major offered his arm, the servants drew back the folding-doors, and they went through several apartments into the dining-hall.

The Major had his seat at the left of Frau Ceres, and the priest at her right; next to him was Fräulein Perini, and then the physician, Sonnenkamp, the architect, Roland and Eric took their respective seats.

The priest said grace to-day aloud. The conversation was, at first, wholly incomprehensible to Eric, for it was of persons and circumstances that he knew nothing about. The great wine establishment, the son of whose proprietor had bought, with Pranken, the beautiful horses, was often mentioned. The head of the firm had realized enormous profits, at a sale held at one of his wine-vaults up the stream. It was reported that he intended to give up business entirely, and to reside at the capital, for the shrewd old gentleman was very desirous of gaining the consideration and good will of the court.

"I give him credit," cried the doctor, "of being infatuated with the notion of getting ennobled."

Herr Sonnenkamp, who just that moment had put into his mouth some fish cut up very fine, was seized with such a sud-

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den and violent fit of coughing, that all the table were anxious at seeing him turn so red in the face; but he soon re-assured them, saying that he had only incautiously swallowed a fish-bone.

The Major thought it unfitting that the great wine-merchant should allow himself to stand as a government-candidate for the chamber of deputies, and that, too, against such a man as Weidmann. Eric gave attention when this name was now again mentioned; it was always as if an indescribable train of honors waited upon it. But the doctor continued, by saying that the Wine-count was only desirous of satisfying his ambition, and his purpose to make himself acceptable to the government, and that he would succeed even if he knew that he would be beaten, for he appeared in the journals as a supporter of the Government.

"Now, Herr priest," he directly asked, "which candidate will the clergy vote for?"

The priest, a tall, slender form with white hair, and remarkably bright eyes, which looked keen and quiet from beneath the massive eye-brows, united both dignity and adroitness in his deportment. He would have been very glad to remain silent, but he now said—moving his left hand, with the thumb and forefinger joined—that there was really no opposition to be made to Weidmann's good qualities as a citizen.

The doctor was obliged to put up with this indirect reply. But the Major extolled very decidedly the noble character of Weidmann, who was sure to triumph.

The Major always spoke with great difficulty, and turned purple even to the roots of his white hair, whenever he was obliged to address not his immediate neighbor only, but the whole table as well.

"You speak as a brother Freemason," said the physician, giving him a nod.

The Major looked grimly at him, shaking his head, as if to say, One should not jest about such things; but he said nothing.

Sonnenkamp was very free in declaring, that although he paid taxes in this country, he should not vote; that he was cosmopolitan, and considered himself and his family to be only guests in Germany.

Eric's glance and that of the doctor met, and both looked towards Roland. What can be expected of a boy, to whom it is said, The State in which you live is of no account to you at all?

The physician, having begun to make a butt of the Major, kept it up incessantly. Known and liked as a jovial person, the physician was, early in the day, in the hilarious mood of one who has just risen from a well-spread table, and his very lively tone contrasted strangely with the heavy delivery of the Major, who very willingly allowed himself to be made the object of jesting. It seemed to him to be a man's duty to minister, even passively, to his fellow-men; and his features always said, My children, make yourselves merry, even if it is about me.

The priest, in the meanwhile, took the part of the persecuted Major, but it was hard to tell whether it was not for the sake of keeping up the raillery, for the Major smiled in a yet more puzzled way at his advocate, than at his assailant. The priest always began in a sort of narrative way, and as he went on, shot his well-aimed shafts on all sides, preserving at the same time his polished and obliging manners, and never losing sight, for a moment, of the respect due to his spiritual calling; and he had, in particular, certain tranquillizing motions with his handsome, delicate hands. The eyes of Fräulein Perini seemed to expand, more and more, and to feast in gazing, as she looked at the ecclesiastic, and listened to him with her eyes. Only she could not repress her discomfort, when the priest, after the fashion of the snuff-taking clergy, rolled up his blue linen pocket-handkerchief into a ball, and, in the full flow of discourse, tossed it from one hand to the other. She breathed more freely when he put the horrible blue handkerchief into his pocket.

Fräulein Perini maintained a tranquil imperturbability towards the rough and excitable temperament of the physician, while he regarded her as a sort of colleague; and it was really the case, that she had some medical knowledge. He had a particular respect for her, inasmuch as she had never consulted him in regard to any ailment. She lived very temperately, indulged sparingly in the luxurious entertainments and the rich daily repast, seemed to have no wants, and devoted herself to the service, or more properly, to the accommodation, of others. Doctor Richard took the liberty, as a physician of extensive practice, to use but little ceremony, and was as much the popular as the pampered despot of the whole district, and especially of the Sonnenkamp household. He was talkative at the table, eating but little, and drinking so much the more to make up for it. He praised the wines, knew them all, how long they had been kept, and when they were mellow. He inquired about an old brand, and Sonnenkamp ordered it to be brought; the physician found it harsh, rough, and immature. Herr Sonnenkamp would often look up dubiously to the physician, before

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partaking of some dish, but he would say in anticipation: —

"Eat, eat, it won't hurt you."

"The really best thing in the world would be to drink," Sonnenkamp said, jestingly.

"It's a shame that you never knew the 'precious Borsch,' cried the doctor, "who once uttered that illustrious saying, 'The stupidest thing in the world is, that one can't also drink what he eats.'" Turning to Eric, he continued: —

"Your friend Pranken doesn't speak well of our Rhine-land, but this ill-humor is only an epidemic catarrh while getting acclimated, which every one must catch. I hope you will not be so long in getting over it. Look at this bottle of wine, — all is corked up here that poetry, the scenic art, and creative art can do to enchant and enliven us; the drinker feels that he is not a common pack-horse, and though, theoretically, he does not know what elements of the beautiful are contained in such a bottle, he has no need to know, he tastes it; he drinks in, in fact, the beautiful."

"Provided there is no adulteration," the architect suggested.

"Very true," the doctor cried in a loud voice; "we used to have very few cases of delirium-tremens, now so common in our district; and delirium-tremens is not from the wine, but from the alchohol in it. Do you know anything about wine?" he asked, turning to Eric, and, as if actual president, calling upon him for his opinion.

"Not any."

"And yet you have probably composed drinking-songs, where the chorus always comes in, 'We will be merry, let us be merry, we've been merry,' and after the first bottle, the merry gentlemen can't stand on their rhimed feet any longer."

A glance towards Roland brought the doctor to his senses; it was not well to make Eric a subject of ridicule in this way. He therefore turned the conversation, and gave Eric, whom he called with special friendliness Herr Colleague, an opportunity to narrate many interesting incidents of the collegiate and military life. The Major nodded approval; through Eric's conversation he was left in peace, and could give his undisturbed attention to eating and drinking. Under the napkin which he had pinned to his shoulders, he opened his uniform. It is well, he thought, that Fräulein Milch has furnished me with such a nice white vest, and it ought to be seen. He was on the best of terms with the servants, and whilst they were changing the wine, it only needed a wink to Joseph, a universal favorite, and he immediately poured out some choice Burgundy from the sparkling crystal decanter for the Major.

The Major drank no more. The conversation had taken a happy turn, after Eric began to speak of the Geneva convention for the care of those wounded in battle. This was a good common point of union for the priest, the physician, and the soldier, and, for a time, the conversation at table was harmonious and well-sustained.

The Major, in a loud tone, declared that men who did not like to have their names mentioned were the original movers in this, as in all other humane arrangements. The physician remarked to Eric, in a lower tone than ordinary, that the Major attributed to the Freemasons all the good in the world, and if he wished to keep in his good graces, he must never say anything against Freemasonry.

The entire table listened with great attention to Eric, as he asserted that we ought to be proud to see in our century such an arrangement established on the ground of pure humanity; and the priest himself nodded in assent, when Eric added that the Christian religion, in its self-sacrificing devotion to the care of the sick, had attained an elevated position, purer and loftier than had ever before been reached, in any age, and under any dispensation.

Roland was happy to see the gleaming eyes of all resting upon Eric, and collected them all in one focus for him.

They arose from table, and a blessing seemed to have descended upon the whole repast. The priest engaged in silent prayer, and the Major, coming to Eric, pressed his hand rather tightly, saying in a subdued tone: —

"You are one already, you must learn the signs."

Eric was so excited, that he hardly heard what the old man said, although he expressed his highest possible esteem in this readiness to accept him as a Freemason.

"See," cried the doctor, impudently, "see how much whiter the hair of our Major has turned."

And it actually seemed so, for the face of the Major was so permanently red, that its color seemed incapable of being deepened, and now from the excitement of the conversation and the wine, the whiteness of the hair was in reality discerned with greater distinctness.

"The Major's hair has become whiter," everybody now said, and the bewildered smile, that was always round his mouth, exploded in a loud laugh.

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CHAPTER III.

THE WORLD OUTSIDE.

THE doctor was informed, immediately after dinner, that many patients were waiting for him, for it was generally known that he dined on Sunday here at the villa. He hastily took a cigar from Sonnenkamp, and said that Eric must accompany him, as he wished to speak with him. He said this in a positive manner admitting of no refusal.

After they had turned the corner, the physician extended his hand to Eric, saying in a hearty tone,—

"I am the scholar of your grandfather, and I also knew your father at the University."

"I am very glad to hear it; but why did you not tell me that at once?"

The doctor looked at him awhile from head to foot, then he laid both hands on his shoulders, and shaking his head, but in a cordial tone, said,—

"I have been mistaken in you. I thought that the species idealist had died out; you are doctor of world-wisdom, but not doctor of worldly wisdom. Dear captain-doctor, what's the need of their knowing yonder how you and I stand with each other? — So you wish to live with Herr Sonnenkamp?"

"Why not?"

"The man can't weep if he would, and you —?"

"Well, and I?"

"With you the tear-sack is filled at every emotion, as when you spoke there of your father, and of the noble care of the sick — you have a talent for hypochondria."

Eric was struck. This style of personal criticism was novel to him, but before he could reply, the doctor called to the waiting group of patients standing at the entrance of the porter's lodge,—

"I am coming in a moment! Wait here for me, and I'll come back soon," he said now to Eric, and went up to the group, all of whom took off their hats and caps. He spoke with one and another, taking out a blank book with loose leaves, and writing several prescriptions, with the back of a broad-shouldered man for a desk, and giving to others only verbal directions.

Eric stood in a fixed attitude, and he realized that he was wanting in worldly wisdom, but a deep feeling of happiness took possession of him, that his grandfather and father sent him here a friend. An unknown and inestimable inheritance was awaiting him in all places, like a harvest gathering in from all quarters; he regarded the family and its rich possessions with a different feeling; he was no longer poor.

The physician, coming back, said with a more cheerful countenance,—

"I am now free. Count Clodwig has told me about you, but he has given me a wrong impression of you. Never mind! Every one sees, standing in the centre of his own horizon, his own rainbow. I wished only to say to you, that what one — pardon me — what one does for you, is hardly the payment of interest, for no human being has done more for others than your grandfather and your father. Now allow yourself for once to undergo a regular examination. I saw you years ago, when you were coupled with the prince."

The doctor receded a step from Eric, and continued,—

"The crossing of races is a good one. Father, Huguenot, — Mother, pure German, real blond, delicate organization, — proper mixture of nationalities. Come with me into the arbor. Will you allow me a brief and concise diagnosis?"

Eric smiled; the physician's method of passing him under review and pronouncing verdict upon him seemed extremely odd, but yet he felt attracted.

Striking off on a twig the ashes from his cigar, the doctor asked,—

"Can you have intercourse with any one day by day, and not like him, or at least have some regard for him?"

"I have never tried it, but I think not; and such an intercourse assuredly hurts the soul."

"I expected this answer. For my part, I say with Lessing, It is better to live among bad people, than to live apart from everybody. May I ask still another question?"

But without waiting for a reply, he continued,—

"Have you ever experienced ingratitude?"

"I think that I have, as yet, done nothing which deserves gratitude. Especially may we ask, Ought we to lay claim to any thanks, inasmuch as what we do in behalf of others, we do, first of all, to secure our own self-approval."

"Good, good. Wise already. Yet one thing more. Do you believe in natural depravity, and if you do, since when?"

"If by depravity you mean the conscious delight in injuring others, then I am no believer in it, for I am convinced that all evil doing is only a stepping over the limits of a justifiable self-preservation; it is only an excess caused by sophistry or passion.

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Perhaps the belief in depravity is also merely passion."

The doctor nodded several times, and then said,—

"Only one question more. Are you sensitive—vulnerable?"

"I might perhaps urge your friendly testing as a proof that I am not."

The doctor threw away the cigar, which he had not wholly smoked up, and said,—

"Excuse me, I was in an error; my final question has another at the end of it. Now to conclude: Are you surprised, when you find simply stupid some little man or some little woman in fashionable clothes, and with polished address, and are you willing to take them as simply stupid, without attributing to them principles of action, and a comprehension of the principles of others?"

In spite of the evidently friendly intention, Eric's patience was exhausted; he replied to this, not without some irritation, that he had been through a great many surprising examinations here, but the present was the most surprising of all.

"You will perhaps have some light upon it, by and by," the physician said in a low tone, stealthily pressing Eric's hand, for he saw Fräulein Perini coming along the path, and he went to join her.

The company at table met again at the fountain, chatted awhile, and then separated. The priest and the Major invited Eric to call upon them; the physician asked Sonnenkamp if Eric and Roland might not be allowed to drive with him upon his round of visits. Sonnenkamp appeared struck that Roland and Eric were linked together in this way, but he nodded his assent. Eric and the doctor seated themselves in the open carriage, and Roland took his seat with the coachman, who gave him the reins.

The day was bright and full of the fragrance of flowers, bells were ringing, and larks were carolling.

They drove to a village lying at a distance from the river. From a garden where the elder was in bloom came the beautiful music of a quartette song, and under a linden in an enclosed place, boys and youths were engaged in gymnastic sports.

"O this magnificent German land of ours!" Eric could not refrain from exclaiming. "This is life! This is our life! To cheer the soul with inspiring song, and the body with brisk motion,—this makes a people strong and noble, and honor and freedom must be theirs! All that is great belongs to us, as well as to the classic world."

The doctor, laying his hand quietly upon Eric's knee, looked him full in the eye, and then begged him, if he remained here, to make himself thoroughly acquainted through him with the Rhine life, and not allow himself to be misled, if he should find much that was repulsive both inside and outside of the house. "And if you can—I believe you alone can, if you can't, I give it up—confer upon the boy there, not merely joy in what he has, but joy in the great life of the nation and of the community, which now he has not, then you will have accomplished something that is worth living for. But the main point is, while you are doing this, to have no thought of self, and then the blessing will not fail. This is what I understand by the direction, 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God—that is, the life of truth and of love—and all things shall be added unto you.' Roland," he interrupted himself by calling, "stop here."

The doctor got out, and went into a small but neat-looking house; Eric and Roland went to the gymnastic-grounds. They were regarded at first with great shyness; but when Eric readily showed a fine-looking youth, who went through some exercise clumsily, how to do it better, and when, stripping off his coat, he swung with agility on the horizontal bar, every one became more familiar. Roland also attempted some of the exercises, without much success, and Eric said that they would practise them diligently, but it was unfavorable that they would be obliged to engage in them by themselves, for there was much greater animation and exertion of all the powers, when there was a common emulation.

A messenger came to call Eric and Roland back to the house where the doctor had stopped. Just as the physician came out of the house, the church-bell tolled; all the bystanders took off their hats, even the doctor, and he said,—

"A human being is dead; the man has lived out the term of existence; he was seventy-two years old, and yet yesterday, on his death-bed, he gained comfort in the recollection of a little deed of beneficence. In the year of the famine, 1817, he was travelling as a journeyman cooper over the Lunenburg heath—he continually called it the Hamburg heath—where there was no road; and after several hours he came across a wretched hovel, in which were several children crying from hunger. The cooper had some dried eels, and some bread in a tin box. He gave all to feed the children, and they were happy. 'Mark,' he said to me only yesterday,—'mark how it does me good, and always rejoices me, that I could at that time feed the children, and

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perhaps they never have forgotten it, that once a stranger appeased their hunger.' Is it not beautiful that a man can gain solace from a single good deed? He has suffered much, and death is a release to him. Yes, my young friend, such is the world! There outside all is in bloom, people are singing, exercising, sporting, and in the meanwhile, a human being is dying — pooh!" he cried, recovering himself, "I have not brought you with me to make you troubled, Roland; drive the whole length of the village to the last house." And turning to Eric, he said, —

"We are going to see cheerful poverty; you are now to look upon the bright side. The man is a poor vine-dresser; has seven children, four sons and three daughters, and in their poverty they are the merriest people to be found anywhere, and the merriest of all is the old father. His real name is Piper; but because he sings with his children and practises them finely as often as he can get a chance, he is called Sevenpiper."

They drove to the house; the daughters were sitting before the door, the sons were at the gymnastic-ground. Sevenpiper immediately made his appearance, and said that his sons should be sent for. The doctor then asked how things were going with him.

"Ah, Herr doctor," he replied, in a loud tone, "it is always so; my youngest always has the best voice." And turning to Roland, he added, —

"Yes, dear sir, I make my children rich too; each one receives from one to two hundred songs as an outfit, and if they can't make their way through the world with that, then they are good for nothing."

The sons came, and now a cheerful song was struck up, so that the doctor and Roland were put into excellent spirits, and Eric, who quickly caught the tune, sang with them.

The old man nodded to him, and when the song was ended, said, —

"Herr, you can sing too, that's a fact."

The doctor always carried a bottle-case in his carriage, and drawing upon it now, every one became exceedingly merry; and Sevenpiper informed them, and more particularly Roland, that the best thing in the world was to be in good health, and make music for one's self.

The physician took leave, and at evening, Roland and Eric, in a joyous mood, left the house. Sevenpiper's two oldest sons went with them to the bank of the river, where they unfastened the boat, and rowed to the villa.

The water was now very still and clear, and reflected the red glow of the sunset-sky. Eric sat by himself in silence, during one of those blissful hours when one thinks of nothing, and yet enjoys all. Roland kept time in rowing with the sons of Sevenpiper; then, without stroke of the oar, they let the boat float, and it glided noiselessly along in the middle of the stream.

The stars were glittering in the sky when they arrived at the villa.

CHAPTER IV.

THE GOSPEL OF THE RICH YOUNG MAN.

The architect came in the morning for Roland, who was to make, under his direction, some drawings of the castle-ruins.

Herr Sonnenkamp reminded Eric that he was to visit the priest, and he set out soon after he had seen Fräulein Perini return from mass. The priest's house had a garden in front, and was in silent seclusion in the village itself silent. If the bell had not rung so loudly, and if the two white Pomeranian dogs had not barked so loudly, one would have believed that there could be no loud noise in such a well-arranged establishment as this appeared to be at the very entrance-hall. The dogs were silenced, and the housekeeper told Eric, who seemed to be expected, to go up stairs.

Eric found the ecclesiastic in his sunny, unadorned room, sitting at the table, and holding in his left hand a book, while his right lay upon a terrestrial globe supported upon a low pedestal.

"You catch me in the wide world," said the ecclesiastic, giving Eric a cordial welcome, and biding him take a seat upon the sofa, over which hung a colored print, of St. Borromeo, which was well-meaning enough, but not very beautiful.

A home-like peacefulness was in this room; everything seemed to express an absence of all pretension and all assumption, and a simple desire to pass the hours and the days in quiet meditation. Two canary birds, here, however, in two cages, appeared to entertain a lively desire, as did the dogs below, to give vent to their feelings. The ecclesiastic called to them to be quiet, and they became dumb, as if by magic, and only looked inquisitively at Eric.

The priest informed him that he was just following out on the globe the journey of a missionary; and he caused the globe to revolve, while saying this, with his delicate right hand.

"Perhaps you are not friendly to the missionary spirit?" he asked immediately.

"I consider it," Eric replied, "to be the

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first step in the world's civilization, and it is a grand thing that the missionaries have everywhere spread a knowledge of written language, through translations of a book revered as holy, and in that way have reduced to an organic form, as it were, the inorganic languages of all peoples.

The priest closed the book that lay open before him, folded his hands in a kind of patronising way, that seemed natural to him as the official form of consecration, and then placing the tips of the fingers of one hand upon those of the other, he said that he had heard of Eric many favourable things, and that, from his own experience, he was prepossessed in favor of those who changed their calling out of some internal ground of conviction. To be sure, fickleness and restlessness, never at ease in any regular employment, often led to this, but where this was not the case, one could predicate a deep fundamental trait of sincerity.

Eric thanked him, and added that the dignity of any vocation lay not in the external consideration awarded to it, but in the preservation of the purely human inherent in every calling.

"Very just," replied the ecclesiastic, extending one hand, as if with a benignant blessing. "The ecclesiastical vocation is therefore the highest, because it does not strive after gain, nor enjoyment, nor fame, but after that which you — I know not for what reason — call the universally human, when it ought simply to be called the divine."

A certain degree of humility, and a reluctance to make any opposition, came over Eric, as he listened to the ecclesiastic setting forth in such mildly discordant tones the precise point of difference. It seemed, after every word, as if the sacred peacefulness of the place gained fresh potency; nothing of the world's noise intruded there, and all its bustlng activity was far away.

The park, and the country-house in the distance over the river, could be seen from the window; the ecclesiastic took special notice of Eric's lively interest in the beautiful, quiet view, and remarked,—

"Yes, Herr Sonnenkamp has arranged all that for himself, but the beauty is also our gain. I really never go out of my house, except for some parochial work."

"And do you never feel yourself solitary here in the country?"

"Oh no! I have myself, and my Lord, and God has me. And the world? I had in the great city, even, nothing different — my parish, my church, my house — what, besides these, is there, is not there for me."

A reminiscence of his early youthful years was awakened in Eric's soul, and he told the priest that the thought had often presented itself to him, in the midst of his jolly garrison life, that he had a fitness for the ecclesiastical vocation, but that he could not devote himself to it without a belief in revelation.

"Yes, indeed, one cannot make himself believe, but one can make himself humble, and every one can and ought to do that, and then the grace of believing is vouchsafed."

The ecclesiastic announced this as if it were a mathematical axiom, and Eric replied in a modest tone,—

"Every man acquires a ground-work of thought and feeling, just as he does his mother tongue, by hearing it spoken; and might it not be said also, that his soul acquires a language which has no outward sound, but which becomes embodied as a religious disposition and habitual tendency, and which, if it is genuine, cannot be interfered with, for, in this primitive stratum, root and soil are one and the same."

"You have studied the Mystics?" asked the ecclesiastic.

"Only partially. I should like to say further, that all fair controversialists are obliged to agree upon something as unassailable, or undemonstrable."

That holy stillness again possessed the place, where two human beings were breathing, who desired each in his own way to serve the highest.

"You are at the age," the priest resumed, "when young gentlemen think of marriage, and as is the prevailing fashion, marriage with a maiden who has money, — a great deal of money. You appear so true-hearted, that I must ask you directly, although I would much rather not, if it is true that you are a suitor of Fräulein Sonnenkamp?"

"I? " Eric asked with vehement astonishment. "I?"

"Yes, you."

"I thank you," Eric said in a clear voice, recovering from his amazement, "I thank you, that you question me so directly. You know I am not of your church."

"And Fräulein Sonnenkamp is of our church, and it would be hard —"

"I was not thinking of that," Eric said, interrupting him. "Wonderful, through what tests I must pass! First a supercilious cavalier, then a nobleman, then a military officer, then a doctor, and now in the priestly sieve."

"I do not understand you."

"Ah, truly," began Eric, "and I tell you, I confess to your noble, mild countenance, and so I acknowledge to you, seeing

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you before me, that I admire the undisturbed unity of your being from which comes the Catholic law of celibacy as a dogma, and I allow myself to claim that we have reached the same ideal stand-point. Yes, honored sir, I say to myself, he who wishes to live for a great idea, whether he is artist, scholar, priest, he can need no family, he must renounce its joys, apart by himself without any hinderance, that he may fulfil his mission in the perpetual service of thought."

"Divisus est! divisus est!" repeated the ecclesiastic. The holy apostle says that he who has a wife is divided, and he will be yet more divided, whilst the lot of his children becomes his own. The ecclesiastic has no changes of lot."

A smile passed over the countenance of the priest, as he continued: —

"Only imagine a priest married to a quarrelsome wife — there are also peaceable women, gentle and self-sacrificing, and it is certain that there are quarrelsome ones too — and now the priest is to mount the pulpit in order to proclaim the word of peace and love, when an hour before in dispute and scolding — "

The ecclesiastic suddenly ceased, placed the forefinger of his left hand on his lips, and bethought himself, that he was wandering from the real point. Did not Fräulein Perini inform him that Eric had visited the convent before he came to this place? He looked at Eric, who had led him from the direct inquiry, wondering whether he had done it from prudence, or whether it was really from excitement. He hoped, indeed, to attain his end in some different way; and, apparently in a very natural manner, but yet with a lurking circumspection, he now asked whether Eric really felt confident, from his position, of being able to train a boy like Roland.

When Eric answered in the affirmative, the ecclesiastic further asked: —

"And what do you mean to give him first, and in preference to everything else?"

"To sum it up in few words," replied Eric, "I wish to give Roland joy in the world. If he has this, he will furnish joy to the world; that is to say, he will desire to benefit it; if I teach him to despise the world, to undervalue life, he will come to misuse the world and the powers entrusted to him in it."

"I regret," said the priest in a gentle tone, "that you are not a believer; you are on the way to salvation, but you turn aside into a by-path. Do you know what riches are? I will tell you. Riches are a great temptation, yes, perhaps the greatest of our time; riches are a force in nature, perhaps the most lawless, most untamable, and the hardest to be governed. Riches are a brutal power, for which there is no ruler, except the Almighty Lord; riches are below the brute, for no brute has any more force than it embodies in itself. Man alone can be rich, can have what he is not himself, and what his children cannot consume. Here is the misery of it! Whoever gains so much of the world hurts his own soul. I have tried to bring this family and this boy to this, that they should at least make the acknowledgment, before every meal, that what they enjoy in such luxurious abundance is only a gift. Do you believe that this boy, conscious of his riches, and this whole family, can receive a moral culture except through religion? A prayer before one sits down to eat is a meditation, a recollection of the fact that thou hast some one to thank for what thou dost enjoy. This takes out the vainglorious pride, and gives humility instead, and makes one give, even as he himself has been given to. Only where the fear of God is, yes, fear, is there also the blissful feeling of His Almighty protection. On the table of this rich man there is placed, every day, a display of sweet-smelling, bright-colored flowers,— what does that matter? On the poorest table of the neediest cottager is placed a bouquet more beautiful and more fragrant, from the higher realm, through the utterances of prayer; and the soul is filled, and this first makes the filling of the body conduce to its health. But this is only one thing. Above there, on the Upper Rhine, they call personal property movables, and so it is! The riches of the present world are nothing but movables, moving possessions, and they will move away. Believe me," cried the ecclesiastic, laying his hand upon Eric's, "believe me, the public funds are the misfortune of the present age."

"The public funds? I do not understand."

"Yes, it is indeed not so easy to understand. Of whom can one borrow millions? of no one but the State. If there were no public funds, there would be no one to lend such great sums; that's the way it is. Formerly, a man could not acquire so many millions, because he could not lay out so many millions; but now there are the public funds, and everybody lives on interest-money, and interest is very properly forbidden by the canons. See, in old times the rich man had a great deal of real estate, many fields and forests, and he was first of all dependent upon God's blessed sun, and when everything in good time had ripened, and lay there in the sight of all, then he

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gave a tenth part to the church. But now the riches are tucked away in fire-proof, burglar-proof safes, not dependent on sun, not on wind and weather, are not visible to the world, and have no tenth of the profit to give,— at the most a trifling discount on the coupons to the banker; the harvest of the bond-holder is the cutting off of coupons; these are the sheaves of his harvest-home. If the Lord should come to-day, he would find no temple from which to drive out the money-changers and traders, they have erected for themselves their own temples. Yes, the stronghold of Zion, to-day, to which princes, as well as rich men, make their pilgrimage and commit themselves to its protection,— it is the Bank of England! Have you ever once thought of this, what is to become of humanity, what of States, if this increase of state-debts continues to go on in this way? of course not. The whole earth will be one tremendous mortgage, and mortgaged to whom? to him who lends on long credit, but who will, some time or other, demand payment. A universal conflagration will come, against which no fire-proof vaults will avail, and a deluge, which will wipe out the millions and millions upon millions of State debts. I am not a man who delights in seeing mischief done, but this I would say,— I should like to live to see the Bank of England bankrupt. Only imagine it! At night the news comes, It is all gone. Then will thousands of small men and small women see, for the first time, how small they are, when they see themselves at once stripped of all their trappings, and set down upon the bare earth."

Eric smiled. Every man placed in solitude, without an environment of equalizing conditions, entertains readily peculiar notions that dart through his mind; and he said that the earth would be burdened with greater debts than it could pay, if it could only find those who would advance the money. But the real possession of humanity was of more value than the whole earth could pay for, as its greatest possession was its ideal being, its power of working; and while, formerly, all property was in the soil, it was just the problem of the modern age to make available ideal and personal property. He wished further to add, that even among the Romans in the time of the Republic itself, the wealth of individuals was thus enormously excessive; but the ecclesiastic, in his great excitement, seemed scarcely listening to him, went to his book-case, took down a great Bible, and opening to a passage, handed the book to Eric.

"There, just read; that is the only way that Roland can be educated. Read aloud."

Eric complied, and read: —

"And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is God. Thou knowest the commandments, — Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honor thy father and mother. And he answered and said unto him, Master, all these things have I observed from my youth. Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest; go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow me. And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved; for he had great possessions. And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God!"

"And now stand up and tell me," said the priest, in a trembling voice, "tell me honestly, is not that the one and only method?"

"Honestly, no: I love and revere him of whom this is told, perhaps more than many a church-believer, and it is particularly affecting to me, and at this moment wonderfully touching is that passage, where it is said here,— Then Jesus beholding him loved him. I see the handsome rich young man in the presence of the sublime Master; the young man is glowing and filled with a genuine ardor; then the Master dearly loves him as he looks into his countenance. However — "

"That is incidental, that is incidental. Speak to the main subject," the priest interrupted.

"According to my view of the subject," Eric replied, "I must own that I consider this teaching to have been given at a time when all actual might, the power of the State, riches, and all the good things of life, were contemned, and when they were obliged to reject everything which had no reference to their purely ideal view. That

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could alone maintain the uprightness of noble souls in a time of oppression under foreign rule; and this teaching could have been given at a time only, and by a soul, which sees all that is worth living for vanishing away, which builds up a new creation, and in which pure thought has entire sway. But if each one gives away, and gives away continually, who is there in that case to be the recipient? And why is it that this doctrine, that no one is to possess anything, has not become a command of the Church?"

"I am glad," answered the ecclesiastic, "that you have touched the real point. Our Church has commands which are not universally binding, but are only so for him who wishes to be perfect, as, for instance, the law of chastity and of poverty. Only he who wishes to be perfect comes under it."

"I ask," interposed Eric, "is the teaching of revelation, which is amply sufficient for the purely spiritual, sufficient also for the worldly? In the course of the development of humanity do not new social conditions establish themselves in the world, as out of nature new forces, steam, electricity—"

"Man," replied the priest, "is always the same from eternity to eternity, the citizen only changes. But I see now, you are letting yourself be guided into the right path. I do not desire—the rich man himself did not desire it—that the boy shall be perfect, and therefore the command to sell his possessions is not applicable to him. I only say to you, you will not be able to educate this boy unless you give him positive religion. The brute does all he has power to do; with it there is no word 'ought;' but man does not do all that he has power to do. Simply to do that for which one has the strength, or, yet more properly, the inclination, and to do everything purely from inclination, that is not the human; the human begins there where one tramples his inclination under foot, and does what God's law commands. Were every one to act according to his inclination, then should we be sure, at no time, what would become of humanity. The law of God holds it together, and holds it erect. Here is the significance of the law of God, here begins the fall, which the gentlemen of natural science have never got over. The animal has urgent impulses; man can voluntarily awaken impulse, excite it, goad it, multiply it; where is there a limit here, except in God's law? I am not speaking of any Church. You have, so much I know, busied yourself chiefly with history?"

"Not so particularly."

"Well, you know this much: no people, no State, can be free, at least we have no historical instance to the contrary, no people, no State, can be free without a positive Church; there must be something immovably fixed, and at this very day the Americans are free, only because they subject themselves to religion."

"Or, rather, enfranchise it," Eric interposed, without being heard.

The priest continued:—

"I think that you desire to make a free man of this youth. We also love free men, we want free men, but there can be no free men without a positive religion, and, in truth, without one requiring a strict, legal obedience. The highest result of education is equanimity—note it well—equanimity. Can your world-wisdom produce a harmony of all the tendencies and dispositions of the soul, a quietude of the spirit, a state of self-renunciation, because our whole life is one continual act of self-sacrifice? If you can produce the same result as religion, then, justified by the result, you agree with us. For my own part, I doubt whether you can; and we wait for the proof, which you have yet to give, while we have furnished it now for a thousand years, and still daily furnish it."

"Religion," replied Eric, "is a concomitant of civilization; but it is not the whole of civilization, and this is the distinction between us and the ecclesiastics. But we are not to blame for the opposition between science and religion."

"Science," interposed the priest, "has nothing to do with the eternal life. Although one has electric telegraphs and sewing machines, that has no relation to the eternal life. This eternal life is given only by religion, and its essence remains the same, no matter how many thousand, and thousand upon thousand, inventions he may devise in his finite existence."

Eric inquired now in a diffident tone,—

"But how can the Church itself possess riches?"

"The Church does not possess, it only administers," the priest sharply answered.

"I think that we are getting too far away from the point," Eric said, coming back to the subject. "As we cannot expect that Herr Sonnenkamp and his son Roland will give away all their property, the question returns, how shall we get the right hold?"

"Precisely so," cried the ecclesiastic, suddenly standing up, and walking with long strides up and down the room. "Precisely so; now are we on the very point. Hear me attentively. Observe well, there

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is something new started in the world, a still more homeless condition yet in the higher moral order, and that is the moneyed aristocracy. You look at me in amazement."

"Not amazed, but expecting what will come next."

"Very right. This moneyed aristocracy stands between the nobility and the people, and I ask what it is to do? Must not a rich young man of the middle-class, like Roland, thrown into the whirlpool of life, be inevitably ingulfed?"

"Why he," asked Eric, "any more than the noble youth in the civil or in the military service? Do you suppose that religion saves them from destruction?"

"No, but something positive of a different kind; the historic traditions of the nobility save them. The man of the nobility has the good fortune to complete the preliminary period of youthful training, with the least amount of detriment. He afterwards retires to his estates, becomes a worthy husband, and respectably maintains his position; and, even in the city, in the midst of the mad whirl, his position in regard to the court, and to the higher class in the community, keeps him within prescribed limits. But what does the rich young man of the middle-class have? He has no honorable rank, no social obligation, at least none of any stringency."

"Then it would be, perhaps, the greatest piece of good fortune to Roland, if his father could be ennobled?"

"I cannot say," replied the priest. He was vexed that he had allowed himself to be drawn so near to the subject of a very confidential conversation with Sonnenkamp a short time previous to this. "I cannot say," he repeated, adding besides, "If one could be ennobled with seventeen descents, it might be well; but a new noble — let us say no more of this. I desired to say, that the nobleman has honor, traditionary, inherited obligation; the nobleman has established and has to maintain the maxim, 'noblesse oblige,' 'nobility requires.' What great maxim have riches established? The most brutal of all maxims, one utterly bestial. And do you know what it is?"

"I don't know what you refer to."

"The maxim which this pursuit of gain sets up as its highest is, 'Help thyself.' The beast does that, every one helps himself. Riches thus stand between nobility and people; they occupy that morally homeless position, without a recognized obligation, between nobility and people. I understand by people, not only those who labor with the hands, but also the men of science, of art, and even of the church. The people have work; this moneyed class does not wish for honor, and only wants labor so far as it can have others labor for it, and appropriate to itself the product of their labor. What does it want? gold. What does it want to do with the gold? procure enjoyment. Who guarantees this? the State. What does it do for the State? There's the whole question! Have you any answer?"

Eric's lips trembled, and he replied: —

"If the nobility feels itself obliged and entitled to assume the leadership in the army for war, then are the young men of wealth to feel themselves called to become leaders in the army of peace; and they are to make good their position to the community, to their own circle, and to their fellows, serving without compensation, and actively engaged in entire subjection to authority, as a protection of the whole State, and a sacrifice in all works of beneficence."

"Stop!" cried the priest; "the last is our work. You will never be able to organize that without religion; you will never be able to effect, that people, out of their opulence, out of their luxury, or, as you would denominate it, out of purely humane emotions, shall visit the dying in the huts of the poor, the helpless, the sick, and the abandoned."

As if the ecclesiastic had invoked this high duty of his office, the sacristan now came, and said that an old vine-dresser desired extreme unction. The priest was speedily ready, and Eric departed.

When he came out into the road, and breathed the fresh air, he felt its influence anew. Did he not come out of the atmosphere of incense? No, here was more; here was a mighty power, which placed itself face to face with the great riddle of existence.

Eric sauntered away, lost in thought, and it occurred to him again how much more easy was the task of those who can impart some fixed dogmatic principles which they do not originate, but receive; he, however, must create all out of himself, out of his own cognition.

And can what comes out of your own cognition become a part of the cognition of another?

Eric stood still, and the thought that he would educate himself while educating another made his cheeks glow; the youth should acquire knowledge from himself; for what is all culture which must be imparted from one to another? nothing but help and guidance to him who has a self-moving power.

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Half way up the mountain, Eric stopped at the road which led to the Major's. He looked down at the villa which bore the proud name of Eden, and the Bible story came to his memory. In the garden are two trees, the tree of life in the midst, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil; Eden is lost for him who eats of the tree of knowledge. Is it not always so?

Like a revelation the thought came to him, There are three things given to man upon earth, — enjoyment, renunciation, and knowledge.

Sonnenkamp yonder — what does he wish for himself and his son? enjoyment. The world is a spread table, and man has only to learn to find the right means and the right measure of enjoyment. The earth is a place of pleasure, and brings forth its fruits that we may delight ourselves therewith. Have we no other calling than to drive, to eat, to drink, and to sleep, and then to eat, drink, sleep, and drive again; and is the sun to shine just for this?

What does the priest want? renunciation. This world has nothing to offer, its enjoyments are only an illusive show, which tempt you hither and thither. therefore turn away from them.

And what do you desire? And what ought those to desire whom you wish to make like yourself? knowledge. For life is not divided into enjoyment and renunciation, and knowledge rather includes both in itself, — is the synthesis of both. It is the mother of duty and of all beautiful deeds.

In the old times, the combatants received out of an immeasurable height a protecting shield from the hands of the gods; Eric received no shield, and yet he felt that he was concealed from and protected against all foes, and he was so happy in himself that he felt no desire for any human being, no desire for anything beside; he was upborne by the wings of knowledge.

He went yet farther on in the way. Peaceful, and enjoying an internal satisfaction, he came to the Major's in the next village. He knew that here he should have to stand no examination.

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CHAPTER V.

THE GOOD COMRADE.

The Major lived in a beautifully situated house in the vineyard of a rich vintner from the fortress, or rather, to use the proper expression, of a brother of the order, for the central point of the Major's life rested firmly in Freemasonry, and he cherished it within his life and thought, as his holy of holies; and if men talked of the riddles of life, his face always said, — I see no mystery, all is clear to me; only come to us, we have an answer to everything.

The small house which the Major inhabited was attached to the large mansion; one side looked toward the highroad, and the other commanded a view of the river and the mountains beyond. The Major confined himself strictly to his little house, and his own special little garden with its arbor. He watched over the larger dwelling and its garden, like a castellan, but he never lived there, and often did not enter them for the many months during which they stood empty.

Eric found the Major in his little garden, smoking a long pipe and reading the newspaper, with a cup of cold coffee before him. An exceedingly neat-looking old lady, with a large white cap, was sitting opposite, engaged in darning stockings; she rose as soon as Eric entered the garden, and hardly waited to be presented. The Major touched his cap in military fashion, and took the long pipe from his mouth.

"Fräulein Milch, this is my comrade, Herr Doctor Dournay, lately Captain."

Fräulein Milch courtesied, took up her basket of stockings, and went into the house.

"She is good and sensible, always contented and cheerful; you will become better acquainted," said the Major, as she withdrew; "and she understands men, — no one better, — she looks them through and through. Sit down, comrade, you have come just at my pleasantest hour. You see, this is the way I live: I have nothing particular to do, but I get up early, — it prolongs life, — and every day I gain a victory over a lazy, effeminate fellow, who has to take a cold bath, and then go to walk; he often doesn't want to, but he has to do it. And then, you see, I come home, and sit here in the morning: — and here is a white cloth spread on the table, and before me stand a pot of coffee, good cream, a roll—butter I don't eat. I pour out my coffee, dip in the roll which is so good and crisp — I can still bite well, Fräulein Milch keeps my teeth in order — then at the second cup, I take my pipe and puff out the smoke over the world, and over the world's history, which the newspaper brings me every day. I still have good eyes, I can read without spectacles, and can hit a mark; and I can hear well, and my back is still good; I hold myself as straight as a recruit — and look you, comrade, I am the richest man in the world. And then at noon I have my soup — nobody makes soup like her — my bit of good roast meat, my pint of wine, my coffee — with four beans she makes better coffee than any one else can with a pound — and yet it has happened to me a thousand times to have to sing this song to the fellow sitting here: You are the most ungrateful fellow in the world, to be cross as you often are, and wish for this and that which you have not. Only look round you; see how nice and neat everything is, — good bread, a good arm-chair, a good pipe and so much good rest, — you are the happiest man in the world to have all this. Yes, my dear comrade, you may be deucedly learned — I beg pardon — I mean, you may be very learned — look you — I never studied, I never learned anything, I was a drummer — I'll tell you about it sometime — yes, comrade — what was I saying? ah, that's it, you know a thousand times more than I do, but one thing you can learn of me. Make the best of life; now's the time, be happy now, enjoy yourself now, this hour won't come back again. Don't always be thinking about to-morrow. Just draw a long breath, comrade — there, what sort of air is that? is there better anywhere? — and then we have our nice, clean clothes on! — Ah, thank the Builder of all the worlds! — Yes, comrade, if I had had any one, when I was your age, to tell me what I'm telling you — Pooh, pooh! — What an old talker I am — I'm glad you've come to see me! — Well, how do you get on? Are you really going to drill our boy? I think you are the right man to do it, you will bring him into line — you know, comrade, what that means — only a soldier can do that. Only a soldier can school men. Nothing but strict discipline! — I'll warrant, he'll come out right — he'll do well — Fräulein Milch has always said, 'He'll come out right, if he only falls into the right hands.' The school-masters are all of no use; Herr Knopf was very worthy and good-hearted, but he didn't hold the reins tight. Thank the Builder of all the worlds, now it's all right! — Thank you for coming to see me. If I can help you, remember that we are comrades. It's very fortunate that you have been a soldier. I have always wished — Fräulein Milch can testify that I've said a hundred times, none

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but a soldier will do! — Now let us make a soldier of Roland, a true soldier, he has courage, he only wants the training!"

"I should like," answered Eric, "if I really have the position —"

"Really have the position? There's no doubt about it, I tell you — Pooh, pooh; I'll wager something on that. But, I ask your pardon, I won't talk any more — what were you going to say, comrade?"

"I think we ought not to train him for any special calling; Roland must be a cultivated, wise, and good man, whatever his profession may prove to be —"

"Just so, just so — excellently said — that's right — the fellow has given me much anxiety! How foolish people are, to hanker after millions. When they get them, all they can do is to eat their fill and sleep eight hours, that's all any one can do. The chief point is —" here the Major lowered his voice, and raised his hand — "the chief point is, he must return to nature; that is all the world needs — to return to nature."

Eric luckily abstained from asking the Major what he precisely meant by this mysterious proposition, for the Major would, unfortunately, not have been able to tell him; but he was fond of the phrase, and always used it, leaving every one to find out the meaning for himself.

"To return to nature, everything is included in that," he repeated.

After a while he began: —

"Yes, what was I going to ask? — Tell me, did not you have a great deal to bear as a soldier, because you were a commoner and not a noble?"

Eric answered in the negative, and the Major stammered out, —

"Indeed, indeed — you — a liberally educated man, felt less of it. I asked for my discharge. I'll tell you about it sometime."

Eric mentioned that he had been at the priest's, and the Major said, —

"He is an excellent man, but I call for no aid of the ecclesiastics. You know I am a Freemason."

Eric assented, and the Major continued: "Whatever is good in me has its home in that; we will talk farther of it — I will be your god-father. Ah, how glad Herr Weidmann will be to know you."

And again, at the mention of Weidmann's name, it seemed as if a beautiful view of the highest mountains of the landscape was brought before the mind. The Major resumed: —

"But now as to the ecclesiastics. Look" — he drew his chair a little nearer — "look at my drum, it's all there in that — look you, I was a drummer — yes, smile away, if you like — look you, everybody says such a drum makes nothing but racket, and I tell them there's music in it, as beautiful as — I won't disparage any one — as beautiful as any other — look you, then, I say, — mark my words — then I say, 'I will not quarrel with you if you hear nothing but noise, but don't quarrel with me, if I hear something else.' Look you, I have thought it all over, everything else will be made by machinery, men are very clever, but drum and trumpet-signals can not be made by machinery, human hands and mouths are needed for that; I was a drummer, for example, I'll tell you about it. Look you, I know by the sound what sort of a heart a man has, when he beats a drum; where you, my brother, hear nothing but noise and confusion, I hear music and deep meaning. Therefore, for God's sake, no strife about religions; one is worth as much or as little as another, they only lead the march; but the main thing is, how every man marches for himself, how he has drilled himself, and what sort of a heart he has in his body."

Eric was amused by the eccentricity of this man, who had a deep earnestness and moral freedom peculiar to himself.

Standing his pipe near him, the Major asked, —

"Is there any human being in the world whom you hate, at the sight of whom the heart in your body gives a twist?"

Eric answered in the negative, and said that his father had always impressed it upon him, that nothing injured one's own soul like hatred; and that for his own sake, a man ought not to let such a feeling take root within him.

"That's the man for me! that's the man for me!" cried the Major. "Now we shall get on together. Whoever has had such a father is the man for me!"

He then told Eric that there was a man in the village whom he hated: he was the tax-collector, who wore the St. Helena medal given by the present Napoleon to the veterans, for the heroic deeds in which they had taken part in the subjugation of their fatherland. "And would you believe it!" exclaimed the Major, "the man has had himself painted with the St. Helena medal; the portrait hangs framed in his room of state, and under it, in a separate frame, the diploma signed by the French minister. I don't bow to the man, nor return his bow, nor sit down at the same table with him; he has a different principle of honor from mine. And tell me, ought there not to be some way of punishing such men? I

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can only do it by showing my contempt; it is painful to me, but must I not do it?"

The old man looked much astonished when Eric represented to him that the man ought to be judged mildly, since vanity had great powers to mislead, and besides, many governments had been well pleased to have their subjects win the St. Helena medal, and the man, who was in the service of the state, was not to be sentenced without hearing.

"That's good! that's good!" cried the old Major, nodding frequently, according to his habit; "you are the right kind of teacher! I am seventy years old, that is, I am seventy-three now, and I've known many men, and let people say what they will, I have never known a bad man, one really bad. In passion, and stupidity, and pride, men do much that's wrong; but, good God! one ought to thank his heavenly Father that he isn't such as he might very often have become. Thank you; thank you: you have lifted the enemy from my neck; — yes, from my neck; he has sat there, heavy and — look, here comes the man himself!"

The collector was walking by the garden; the Major went to the hedge with many nods and gestures of his hand; he hoped, perhaps, that the man would utter the first greeting; but as this did not happen, he suddenly called out, with a voice like the explosion of a bomb, —

"Good-morning, Herr Collector!"

The man returned his salutation and went on. The old Major was entirely happy, and passed his hand several times over his heart, as if a stone or burden were removed from it. Fräulein Milch looked out of the window, and the Major asked her to come out, as he had something very good to tell her. She came, looking still neater than before, having put on a white apron, in which the ironed folds were still fresh. The Major told her that the collector was not to blame, for he had received the St. Helena medal only in obedience to the government.

They went together to the house, and the Major showed his guest the rooms where simple neatness reigned; then he looked at the barometer, and nodded, saying to himself, "Set fair."

Then he looked at the thermometer screwed up by the window, and wiped his forehead, as if he had not felt till then how hot it was.

A shot was heard in the distance, and the Major pointed out to Eric the direction whence the sound came, saying, —

"I can hear the gun-practice from the fortress. I find that the rifle-cannon have just the same sound as the smooth-bore. Ah, comrade, you must instruct me in the new art of war. I don't know anything about it, but when I hear them firing down there, all the soldier in me wakes up."

He asked Fräulein Milch to bring a bottle of wine, one of the very best. Fräulein Milch seemed to have it all ready; she brought bottle and glasses directly, but gave the Major a significant look, which he understood, and answered: —

"Don't be afraid; I know very well that I can't drink in the morning. Pray, captain, give me your cork-screw. I take you to be the right sort of man, and the right sort of man always has a cork-screw in his pocket."

Smiling, Eric handed him his knife, which was fitted with a cork-screw.

While the Major was opening the bottle, he said, —

"And another mark of a genuine man is, that he can whistle. Comrade, be so kind as to whistle once for me."

Laughter prevented Eric from drawing up his lips. The bottle was uncorked, and they drank to good comradeship. The Major said, —

"Perhaps we are in better spirits here, than our friend Sonnenkamp in his grand villa. But Herr captain, I say again, an elephant is happy, and a fly is happy too; only the elephant has a larger proboscis than the fly."

The Major laughed till he shook with delight at his comparison, and Eric found the laughter contagious, and as often as they looked at each other, the laughter began afresh.

"You show me the meaning of the proverb," cried Eric, "'a gnat may be taken for an elephant,' and in fact it is correct; not the size, not the mass, but the organism is the life."

"Just so, just so!" exclaimed the Major. "Fräulein Milch, come in again a moment."

Fräulein Milch, who had left the room, re-entered, and the Major continued, —

"Pray, captain, say that once more about the organism. That is the sort of thing for Fräulein Milch, for, look you, she studies much more than she chooses to let any one know. If you please, comrade, the organism once more. I can't tell it half so well."

What was Eric to do? He explained his figure again, and the laughter broke out anew.

Fräulein Milch recommended to Eric the

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school-master of the village, as a remarkably fine writer, and the Major cried, laughing, —

"Yes, comrade, Fräulein Milch is a living roll of honor for the whole region; if you want information about anyone, ask her. And for Heaven's sake, don't let the Countess Wolfsgarten give you any medicine. Fräulein Milch knows much more about it — and no one can apply leeches so well as she can."

Eric saw the good old woman's embarrassment, and began to praise her beautiful flowers, and thriving plants, which stood in the window. The Major asserted that she understood gardening perhaps even better than Herr Sonnenkamp, and if it were only known with what small means she raised her plants, she would get the first prize at the exhibition, instead of the gentlemen with their great forcing-houses.

Turning the conversation, Fräulein Milch said to Eric that it was the chief misfortune of Roland, the poor rich boy, that he had no real satisfaction.

"No real satisfaction?" laughed the Major; "just listen to that!"

"Yes," asserted Fräulein Milch, the ribbons and bows on her cap nodding assentingly as she spoke, "he has merely pleasure and amusements that money can buy, but they are not genuine; and any one who only drives through the world for pleasure, with nothing to do in it, seeks satisfaction in vain."

A gleam of pleasure from Eric's eyes rested on the good Fräulein, and at that moment a secret bond of union, a sense of mutual understanding, was formed between them.

Accompanied by both as far as the garden-gate, Eric left the house. When the door was opened, a brown and white spaniel jumped upon the Major.

"Halloo!" cried the Major, in a tone of mingled scolding and caress, "where have you been again, you disorderly vagabond, who can tell where? and here we've had a visitor; old as you are, you will never learn good behavior and regular habits. Shame on you — shame!"

So spoke the Major to his dog Laadi, well-known in all the country round; he kept a female dog, because the village dogs never fought with her.

As the Major left the garden with Eric, he said, —

"Look at these two posts, these closely-trimmed ash-trees. Several years ago I noticed that the one at the left got its leaves ten or eleven days before the one at the right. Now, once the frost came unexpectedly, and the leaves withered on the left-hand one, and it drooped all summer; since then it has been prudent, and lets the other get its leaves first, and then itself leaves out. Doesn't it seem as if trees had understanding? Yes, dear comrade, everything is better arranged in the world than we understand, and, look you, though I have a pension and nothing to do, I have so many things to keep in sight, that the day is often too short. Now, good-by, and remember that you can always feel at home with us."

And as Eric shook hands, he added: —

"I thank you, for now I have another man to hold dear, and that's the best thing in the world to keep one young and sound."

Eric had gone several steps, when the Major called to him to stop, and coming up to him, said: —

"Yes, as to Herr Sonnenkamp — do not be led astray, comrade. Men of the world either make an idol of a successful man, or they abuse him. Herr Sonnenkamp is somewhat rough outside, but he is good at heart; and, as to his past history, who is there who can feel satisfied with all his past life? can any man? certainly not I, and I don't know anyone who can. I have not always lived as I wish I had. But enough, you are wiser than I."

"I understand perfectly," replied Eric. "American life is an existence without a seventh day of rest; there is a continual working and striving to win money, nothing else. If men have led such a life for half a score of years, they lose the power of turning to anything else; they say to themselves that if they only had enough — ah, those who strive for gold never get enough — they say then they would devote themselves to nobler ends. If it were only still possible! I understand you, and wonder at Herr Sonnenkamp."

"Just so — just so," said the Major, "he must have dragged himself through a good deal of mud, as a gold-hunter, to get such a great property together. Yes, yes, I am easy — you are wiser than I. But now, just for the first time, the main question occurs to me — look at me, tell me honestly, is it true that you have been to see Fräulein Manna at the convent?"

"I have been at the convent, and saw Fräulein Manna, but without knowing her or speaking to her."

"And you didn't come to establish yourself in the house, in order to marry the daughter?"

Eric smiled, as he said in reply, how strangely this question came to him from every direction.

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"Look you, comrade, put the maiden out of your thoughts, she is as good as betrothed to Baron Pranken — I would rather you should have her, but it can't be changed."

Eric at last got away, and went back toward the villa with cheerful thoughts. Good powers were working together, to keep Roland constantly in a circle of thought and feeling, from which he might not deviate through his whole life.

He stopped before a wide-spreading walnut tree, and looked up smiling into its rich branches.

"Sonnenkamp is right," he said to himself; "the planting of trees and their growth depend upon the surrounding heights and the prevailing winds. There are nervous trees, which are killed by the blasts, and others which only strike root when they are blown this way and that by the wind. Is not the life of man such a plant? the men around it constitute its climatic zone."

Eric thought he was constantly getting a better insight into the influences which were helping, and those which were hindering, the true growth of his pupil.

How rich is the world! Up there at the castle sits the old count by his young wife's side, and creates for himself an ideal realm of thought, after a full and active life; — here sits the old Major with his housekeeper. How Bella would turn up her nose if she were compared with that housekeeper, and yet —

Suddenly Eric heard carriage wheels behind him, and a man's and a woman's voice called out to him.

CHAPTER VI.

A THIRD PERSON.

On the day that Eric had left Castle Wolfsgarten, an habitual visitor made his appearance there; this was the son of the eminent wine-merchant, the so-called Wine-count. He came once a week, to play chess with the count. He looked young, but he was worn out in soul, not knowing what to do in the world; he derived no satisfaction from the business of his father, had money enough, had learned a variety of things, was something of a musician, drew a little, had very various talents, but no one predominant. All was wearisome to him; hollow and stale seemed that enjoyment of life which was to be decorously pursued. Wherefore should he devote himself to the restricted limits of some regular pursuit, in order to make money? That is wholly needless. He was a director in several railroads, and for a period it had satisfied him to oversee and to manage, to be saluted respectfully, and listened to obsequiously, by the subordinates held strictly to their place; but that too became distaseful to him. Travelling, too, proffered him nothing further, one had to drag along with himself continually such an extra weight of ennui. He turned a disgusted eye upon the world which had nothing to do for him, and in which he could do nothing. He had cultivated one talent, that of chess-playing, and as Clodwig also took great pleasure in the game, and was skilful in it, he came every week to Wolfsgarten, and played with Clodwig, for it conferred upon him a special regard in his own eyes, and in those of others.

He had also a great reputation, among all those in the neighborhood who prided themselves upon the same qualities as he, of being a rake, and appearing to the world as a gallant. He had a collection of lewd pictures of every kind, and one must be very intimate with him to be able to say that he had seen them all, even to the most carefully hidden. Of course the Wine-chevalier presented a very respectable appearance before the world. No one had ever seen him intoxicated, and, in general society, he always played the part of one very condescending and indifferent, who is yet so noble as to remain in intercourse with these inferior people, as much as to say, One owes that much for old acquaintance' sake. Mothers always warned their daughters of the Wine-chevalier, just as one speaks to children of the wolf howling outside there in the fields, but the mothers themselves did not take it in bad part when he sometimes cast a languishing glance upon them, and even when he frequently said something to them in whispers.

The Justice's daughter, Lina, was not so simple as the mother always said, for she declared that the Wine-chevalier was that transformed manikin in the fairy-tales, who travelled to learn what shivering meant.

The Wine-chevalier of course kept himself fresh in his toilet and his anecdotes, and in everything, externally and internally, that the prevailing fashion required, from year to year, living also for several months in Paris. He did not, like his father, speak of his friend this and the other ambassador, minister so and so, and prince so and so, but he let it be known that he lived in the most inseparable intimacy with the most famous members of the Jockey Club.

The Wine-chevalier always experienced, besides, some degree of pleasure in devoting himself to paying courteous compliments to the virtuous Frau Bella, but she

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looked at him to-day, as if he were not present, and as if she heard not a word of what he was saying. The count also was so abstracted and absent-minded, that he speedily lost all the games, often gazing at him with wonderment, sitting there in the same chair that Eric had occupied.

A new ally to the Wine-chevalier made his appearance, but this was also of no avail to-day. A corpulent man dressed with fastidious nicety likewise called at Wolfsgarten; he was formerly a famous basso, who had married a rich widow from the neighboring commercial city, and settled down here in this beautiful region. At other times he was well received by Bella, for he sang very agreeably with the remnant of his voice. When he perceived that his greeting to-day was not so cordial as usual, he said that he only came to make a passing call, and Bella was vexed so much the more; she did not like to have Wolfsgarten regarded as a place for casual visits. When both had departed, Bella and Clodwig breathed again freely.

Clodwig went into the cabinet, where he kept the collection of objects that had been excavated from the ground; but all here seemed changed. The urns, the vases, the lachrymatories, swords, necklaces, and many figures in relievo looked so very desolate, and a warrior, only half of whose face in burnt clay could be dug out, wore to-day such a hideous visage.

All looked so forlorn, as if these thousand things, brought out of the darkness under ground into the light, were making their moan to Clodwig: What then are we here for? There is something wanting to us, — a piece to each. And if Clodwig had been able to exhibit his soul with all its emotions, he, the well-regulated, would have had nothing but potsherds to show. Something was wanting to him since Eric rode off.

With closed lips, and restless eyes that seemed to be in search of something, he went all day long through house and park. Bella succeeded at last, in bringing him to say that the ideal of his whole life might have been realized, but that he had strangely wanted the requisite energy. He complained, for the first time, of feeling the hesitancy and timidity of age. He made a pause, hoping that Bella would complete the suggestion, but she kept silence; and in a very roundabout way, he explained that people indulged in many luxuries, and yet not the right ones. Finally he came directly to the point, that he considered it wrong to have permitted Eric to depart, he had long wished for such a man, and he might venture perhaps to say, that he would also contribute to the advancement of the young scholar with the Apollo-form.

The upper lip of Bella quivered, and she said, —

"The captain"— she was going to say, the captain in Goethe's "Elective Affinities," and stumbling over this thought, she continued: — "The captain, — I mean, the doctor, — would certainly consider himself very fortunate. But — we ought surely to speak openly. I have the happiness of a firmly established good name, and we do not ask what people say — "

"Speak out direct," Clodwig said encouragingly, and Bella continued after she had passed a fine pocket-handkerchief over her face: —

"Do you not think that this young man — would often — how shall I express it?"

"Put us into an awkward position?" suggested Clodwig. Bella nodded, but Clodwig had already thought that matter over, and he combated the notion, dwelling upon the consideration of how great an enslavement it would be of the good, if they must omit doing what was noble because the bad committed the basest things under the cloak of deceit.

Bella now advised her husband to send a messenger to Eric immediately, so that he might not enter into any engagement. Clodwig pressed her hand, and went into his study, with an elastic step not often seen in him. He began to write there, but soon came to Bella and said that he could not write, and the simplest thing to do was to order the carriage and drive over at once to Villa Eden.

Clodwig avoided, as a general thing, all immediate connection with Sonnenkamp and his family, so far as it was possible with the intimacy of his brother-in-law there, but to-day nothing was said of this, and they drove off in good spirits.

Frau Bella often drew her veil down over her face and raised it again; she was very uneasy, for she thought over a great many things, and when she noticed the quick beating of her heart, she grasped hastily her husband's hand, saying, —

"Ah! you are so good, so angel-pure! I could never have believed that I should be continually discovering new excellencies in you."

With the utterance of these words aloud, she silenced in some degree the voice speaking within her what she was not willing to acknowledge to herself, — yes, she consciously disowned it. It is an incomprehensible whim, a freak — not of passion, no — how could Bella confess that of

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herself? It was the freak of an evil spirit! This young man must possess some incomprehensible, bewildering, magic influence! Bella hated him, for he had disturbed the quiet of her husband, and now was attempting to do the same with her. He should atone for that! She straightened herself back; she was resolved to interrupt the childish, enthusiastic plan of her husband by the very means of her going with him, and if Eric did not perceive her opposition, she would acknowledge it in so many words, and thereby induce him to decline.

Entertaining this thought, she looked up again in a cheerful mood, and Clodwig, perceiving it, settled upon a room for Eric, and laid out the new household arrangement.

A new member of the family too was to be added for Bella, as she was to invite Eric's mother to visit them. It was fortunate that Bella had already known her for some time before, and held her in high esteem. Clodwig informed her that the Dournays also were really of the nobility, and their appellation was Dournay de Saint Mort, and that they had dropped the title only at the expulsion of the Huguenots from France, and he would see to it, in case Eric made a suitable marriage, that his title was renewed, — yes, he could probably do more in his behalf.

Bella asked jokingly, whether he might not desire to adopt him as a son. Clodwig declared that he was not disinclined to do so. With a bitter smile, but to all appearance very lively, Bella answered that it would seem very strange for her to have a son only a few years younger than she was herself.

Now the disentombed antiquities danced joyously before the eyes of Clodwig, and indulged in all sorts of antics. Frau Bella, on the other hand, was exceedingly out of humor; it was a perpetual astonishment to her, that her husband felt so deep an interest in these matters. She had not used deception when, the winter before their betrothal, she had appeared to be a cultivated nature, recognizing the more serious depths of existence, and had manifested an interest in the art-productions of the classic age, in the sciences, and in the higher realities of life; she had, in fact, not wilfully misled him, for she had always supposed that every one regarded these as conversational topics, proper subjects for small-talk. And in regard to the study of the historical development of the past and the present, it appeared to her as a tacitly conventional pastime.

She was terror-stricken to perceive that these great thoughts constituted her husband's very life, that he sorrowed and rejoiced in all that related to the world's progress as in family occurrences, and moreover that he was even religious. He did not speak, as she did, of the dear God, but he would remain in devout contemplation at every manifestation of the Eternal Providence, and wherever a contradiction, a riddle, presented itself, he experienced even a degree of feverish disturbance.

Bella did not confess to herself that the whole appeared to her horribly pedantic, like a preacher or a pedagogue; she had not thought that she was to marry a pedantic professor, instead of a live man.

But whether avowed or not, this whole matter of cherishing a so-called higher interest was extremely wearisome to her. Every one plays only his part in life, and who is to regard it in serious earnest? Those poor devils, the scholars and the philanthropists, may do so, if they please, but not a man of a higher station. Now it appeared that Clodwig was ready to break up a regular routine existence, tedious indeed, but yet tranquil and honorable, by the sudden introduction of a stranger. It was pure calumny, when they said of Bella that she had married the count in the hope of becoming soon a rich and attractive widow. The old Head-equerry had looked out for a good marriage settlement, and a certain part of the income of the great estate was retained and invested yearly, which did not go to the heir by the collateral line. As I have said, it was unmitigated slander that Bella had gone to the altar cherishing a hope of widowhood, but to her alarm — she covered it up whenever she became conscious of it — she found herself growing prematurely old by the side of her husband, who was old enough to be her father.

And who knows how much money Clodwig will spend upon this adventurer, Dournay, who has no regular occupation, and besides, is not in favor at court! But the worst is, that this young man, with his confident expectation of success, will wholly withdraw from her the attention of her husband. They will study with one another, and make explorations, whilst thou wilt be sitting all alone, thou, the young and fresh heart that has devoted itself so nobly, so truly, so self-forgetting, to the care of the old man!

Bella was sorely vexed at Eric, because he made her entertain evil thoughts, and suddenly, while looking at her husband, she cried, —

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"In God's name! Your lips are white. What is the matter?"

Were her evil thoughts suddenly to be realized? But Clodwig answered, —

"It's nothing. Look! There he stands. What a wonderful form! I fully believe that he is occupied with thoughts of deepest moment, as he stands there dreamily, gazing down at the grass."

The carriage rolled on. Eric heard his name called, and looked in amazement at the husband and wife, who gave him a cordial greeting. He was made to take a seat in the carriage, and Clodwig's glance to his wife said, "Hast thou ever seen a nobler specimen of a human form?"

Eric was asked whether he had accepted definitely the situation, and when he replied in the negative, Clodwig extended his hand to him, and said, —

"You will find a welcome with me."

Nothing farther could be said, for just then Sōnnenkamp trotted up on his black horse, and he was extremely glad to be able to salute such visitors; he was very much surprised, however, to see Eric on such intimate terms with them. He rode up to the coach-door, and very joyfully and respectfully welcomed the guests to the villa.

Hardly had they left the carriage, when another drove into the court, and the physician got out.

CHAPTER VII.

THE FIRST ROSE IN FREE-LAND.

Eric acquired an entirely new regard by the arrival of Clodwig and Bella. For the first time Sonnenkamp called him "dear friend."

Herr Sonnenkamp offered his arm to Bella, which she accepted, turning slowly toward him, that Clodwig might see how great a sacrifice she was making; her hand rested lightly on Sonnenkamp's arm. As she was thus walking on, holding the arm of the master of the house, she stopped full of wonder, for there was a rose blooming in full beauty upon a rose-bush raised in the Republic.

Herr Sonnenkamp hastened to pluck it, and presented it to her in some pretty words. Bella said that she was very much obliged to him, and seemed not to notice that he again proffered his arm. They went at once to the hot-houses. Joseph, who was always present at the right time, as if specially summoned, received from his master orders to inform Fräulein Perini and Frau Ceres of the visit. Joseph understood.

The doctor had been summoned to Frau Ceres, but when she learned what guests had arrived, she immediately declared that she was well; but she was cunning enough to say to the doctor, that merely seeing him had made her well. Doctor Richard understood.

In the meantime, Clodwig had said to Eric, "You don't remain here; you go with us. I can't leave you."

He jerked the words out briefly and rapidly, as one utters in a compressed, uniform tone something which has lain in his mind for a long time.

Just then, Roland came down the mountain, with his camp-stool and drawing-board, and Bella called out to him, while far off, in a very friendly "welcome."

"How handsome he is!" said she to those standing about her. "He who could fix permanently this image of the marvellous boy as he is coming along, would have a picture out of the Grecian age, by changing camp-stool and portfolio into spear and shield."

Bella perceived the look of happiness in Eric's eyes, and said to him: — "Yes, Herr Doctor, I once gave to an artist at the capital the design for a picture as I saw Roland; he had sprung across the road, and had cast an alms into the hat of a street-beggar sitting upon a heap of stones; and as he sprang back, so well formed and graceful, every muscle stretched, and his countenance so beaming with the delight of beneficence, it was a wonderful sight that can never be forgotten."

Clodwig looked down to the ground; Bella was evidently not aware that it was not she, but he, who had thus seen Roland and given the order to the artist.

Roland was very much surprised at the visit, and the manner in which he was greeted, Bella saying to her husband, — "Clodwig, kiss him for me!" Clodwig embraced the youth, who now turned to Eric with a puzzled look.

"If the Herr Captain remains with us, you must visit us often, dear Roland," said Bella.

Sonnenkamp was at a loss to know what that meant, but the danger of losing Eric seemed immediately to affect the youth, so that he looked up in a help-imploring way. And it was now clear to Eric, what was intended in regard to him, and he now for the first time understood what was interrupted by Sonnenkamp's coming up to the carriage.

They took only a hasty look at the greenhouses, for Bella said that when it was green and blooming outside, the imprison-

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ment of the plants had something oppressive to her.

Fräulein Perini soon appeared, sent by Frau Ceres, to make known her intention not to be sick to-day.

Bella and Fräulein Perini had separated themselves from the men; they had much to say to each other, and Eric was naturally the first subject. Bella could not forbear expressing her surprise to Fräulein Perini, that she had so completely seen through the singular man, although Fräulein Perini had not really yet said anything. But this remark forced her to reply, though nothing of her real opinion was given; for Fräulein Perini said that she constantly felt fresh admiration at the German learned world, meaning to include Bella, who was to be almost looked upon as a learned woman.

Bella took no notice of this equivocal compliment; she assumed a matronly tone, while confessing that she had no near relation to the young men of the day, and was not sure that she understood them. Neither one of the ladies seemed to come out fully with her opinion, and each appeared to regard the other as cherishing a secret inclination for Eric.

"Do you know," said Frau Bella, looking very attentively at the rose which Sonnenkamp had given her, "do you know that this man with the double title has an insultingly low opinion of the female sex?"

"No, I did not know that, but it may be a part of that radical heresy, as Baron von Pranken calls it, which he parades with such manifest conceit."

"But what opinion have you formed about Herr Dournay?"

"I have not formed any opinion about him."

"Why not?"

"I am not impartial; he does not belong to our church."

"But supposing that he did belong to our church, how would you then regard him?"

"It is not to be supposed. This complacent self-assumption is not possible with a person who has subjected himself to the divine law; his deportment is that of a prince travelling incog., or more properly, as Herr Baron von Pranken says, 'the man coaches round the world in a lecturer's invisible chair.'"

The two women laughed. Bella had found out enough. She very carefully impressed upon Fräulein Perini the necessity of exerting all her influence against the reception of a man proud of his unbelief. Fräulein Perini held her cross with her left hand, and looked somewhat mischievously at Bella. Then the countess does not wish to have him here. Is she trying to bring him into her own house, and getting up a nice intrigue against her husband? She hinted, not without mischievous satisfaction, that Herr von Pranken, who had occasioned all this, must also find the proper remedy. Bella gave out also that Eric was, perhaps, unsuitable in another view; and here, for the third time, it was expressly said, that Eric was a "dangerous" man.

Fräulein Perini had spoken of it as applicable, in two respects, to one present and to one absent, for the special interest of Bella had not escaped her penetrating eye.

Quickly, and in order to conceal how well she had hit the mark, she added, that a man like Otto von Pranken had certainly no one to be afraid of. She spoke with sympathizing eagerness of his journey, that perhaps it was imprudent, but one must let the passionate youthful heart take its own course, and it often brought about the right result better than cautious deliberation and consideration. But Fräulein Perini spoke very plainly, and Bella replied as plainly, in condemnation of Pranken's desire to go counter to the social ordinances, but any such tendency must be indulged, though with great reluctance on their part.

Again the conversation reverted to Eric, and Bella was now extremely good-humored. She pitied the man's aged mother, regarded the self-conscious bearing of the youth as in reality timidity; he carried a haughty outside, that he might cover up thereby the menial dependence. An elevation of the eyelids disclosed that Fräulein Perini was slightly hurt, and Frau Bella quickly added, that pious natures are never really oppressed by dependence, for they have in themselves a higher position, yes, they are through piety constituted the equals of anybody.

Fräulein Perini smiled; she understood how kindly Bella treated her, and there was no need of the friendly pressure of the hand to make her perceive it.

A servant came, and announced that Frau Ceres would receive the gracious countess in the balcony-saloon; she was not allowed by her physician to go out into the open air.

Fräulein Perini accompanied Bella as far as the outside-stairs, and made there a very polite courtesy; Bella, however, grasped both her hands with irrepressible cordiality, and said that she should like such a friend as Fräulein Perini for daily intercourse; she pressingly urged her to confer the honor of a visit without any delay.

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When the rustling of Bella's garments was no longer heard, Fräulein Perini clawed with her little hand like a cat, which, silently lurking, has caught something; contemptuously she opened her eyes, always so veiled, and her small mouth almost uttered the words,—

"You are all deluded."

Frau Ceres complained of her constant suffering, and Frau Bella attempted to console her, saying that she had everything, and especially such splendid children. She knew not which to praise most, the charming attractions of Roland, or the angelic nature of Manna.

Bella seldom came into Sonnenkamp's house, but when she came there, she was always seized by a passion which is perhaps peculiarly a woman's passion. She lived at Wolfsgarten in an abundance which left nothing to be desired, but as soon as she drove through the gate of Villa Eden, an evil spirit came over her; and the demon's name is Envy — envy of this exuberant superfluity, where there was no dragging along under the burden of old lumber and decaying remnants, but everything newly created. And as often as she thought of Frau Ceres, sparkles flashed before her eyes, for she saw then the diamond ornaments of Frau Ceres, such as the reigning princess herself did not possess.

She was thoroughly condescending and gracious to Frau Ceres, and she was happy that she could be condescending. These people can buy everything for themselves, but not a noble, historically famous name; and if the proposal of Otto succeeds, it is only the covering up of lowness with a fresh varnish, which is always begging, "Do not touch me, if you do, I shall rub off."

Eric was here also naturally a prominent subject of conversation, and Frau Bella pressed the rose to her mouth, in order to hide her laugh, when Frau Ceres said, —

"I should like to have the Herr Captain for myself."

"For yourself?"

"Yes. But I don't think I can learn anything more, I am too old and too stupid. He hasn't let me learn anything."

Frau Bella contested very zealously this modesty. Was not Frau Ceres beautiful and young? She might be taken indeed for Roland's sister. Was she not prudent and elegant in her deportment? Frau Ceres smiled and nodded continually, appearing to believe that it was all true. But now Bella felt obliged to take her leave, as she desired to spare the delicate organization of Frau Sonnenkamp.

Frau Ceres looked up timidly at these words; she did not know whether that was praise or blame. Bella took leave, kissing Frau Ceres upon the forehead.

Herr Sonnenkamp had left the count and Eric; he had many things to see after in the house, also letters and despatches had come in, which required an immediate answer. He sent moreover for the Major to dinner, and gave orders that if they did not find him at home, they should go for him to the castle.

Clodwig went with Roland and Eric to their room, and before they were aware, they became engaged so earnestly in conversation that they wholly forgot Roland. The youth sat there dumb, looking sometimes at one, and sometimes at the other. He did not understand what they were saying, but he could feel how much they were enjoying. When Clodwig had retired to his own room, Roland seized Eric's hand and cried: —

"I will also learn, I will also study all, whatever you want; I want to be like you and Clodwig."

A thrill passed through Eric's soul. The invitation from Clodwig was exactly the ideal of all that he could desire, but here was an actual duty of life; he could not choose any longer what course to take.

CHAPTER VIII.

I SERVE.

The Major fortunately came as they were about to sit down to dinner. He was extremely glad to meet Clodwig and Bella here; every manifestation of friendliness between individuals was a cordial to him: it confirmed his proposition that all human beings were immeasurably good, and he could thereby silence the revilers and the doubters. He was grateful to Clodwig and Bella, as if he had received a personal favor; he looked at the chairs as if he would enjoin them to seat right comfortably their occupants. He extended his hand to Eric as to a son; he had become thoroughly attached to him, and now he complained to him, with the tone of a child who has eaten dainties by stealth, that he had allowed himself to be enticed; for, wishing to see for himself whether the workmen at the castle had good food to eat, he had made trial of it, and it tasted so unexpectedly good, that he had completely satisfied his appetite.

Eric comforted him with the suggestion, that the nice dishes might yet perhaps find some spare room.

The Major nodded; he said to Joseph the magic word, "Allasch." Joseph understood. At a small side-table he poured

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out from a bottle surrounded by little glasses; the Major drank off the tonic.

"That's a quartermaster;" then he nodded to Eric, and his face laughed all over, as Eric responded: —

"Of course, the spirit orders the vulgar mass to give way."

Frau Ceres did not come to dinner. They had hardly taken their seats, before the physician was called away; he immediately rose. Sonnenkamp entreated him to remain, but Clodwig said in a very decided tone, that he would like to urge him to obey the summons, for if one placed himself in the situation of those who were expecting the physician, it would appear a cruel thing to be detaining him here meanwhile for one's own enjoyment.

"That is a nobleman, a genuine nobleman!" said the Major to Eric, and Roland, on hearing it, looked round as if somebody had suddenly seized hold of him. Is his father, then, not noble, for desiring the contrary?

Eric had a feeling of what was passing in the boy's mind, and said to the Major, so that Roland could not but hear him, —

"Herr Sonnenkamp spoke on the very just supposition, that the country people very often exaggerate the danger, and needlessly hurry the physician."

"That's true. I've made a mistake, — I thank you, comrade."

Roland drew a long breath, he gave Eric a smile; he would have liked to embrace and to kiss him.

Eric understood this smile. The table seemed disturbed, for the physician, who had easily and briskly led the conversation, left a gap by his departure; and as they were obliged to sit more closely together bodily, in order to fill up this vacant space, so it seemed as if they must now also for the first time draw nearer together spiritually. And the call made upon them to go, in imagination, with the physician to the bedside of a moaning patient, and to the lamenting relatives, had also interrupted the pleasant mood with which they had seated themselves in good cheer at the table.

Eric, who might well consider that the visit of Clodwig and Bella was meant for him, felt under a double obligation to entertain the guests as well as he could, and bring the company at table into a congenial mood. But while he was yet in search of some thoughts to direct the general conversation, the Major stole a march upon him.

He smiled beforehand very pleasantly, for he had something to tell, and now was the aptest time.

"Herr Sonnenkamp," he began, and his face again became blood-red, for he had to speak in the presence of many persons, —

"Herr Sonnenkamp, it is said in the newspaper that you are soon to receive a great number of visitors."

"I? In the newspaper?"

"Yes. It is not said in so many words, but I infer so. It is said there, that an emigration is now taking place from America, on account of the high cost of living there; many families are coming from the New World to Europe, because they can live with us at more reasonable prices, and in a pleasanter way."

The Major congratulated himself, that he had pushed forward into the gap something very agreeable and very suitable. He drank off, at one draught, with great gusto, a glass of his favorite Burgundy.

Sonnenkamp remarked in a careless way, that probably a prejudice would be created against Americans, like that which existed against English travellers.

No one again took up the conversation; they would gladly have heard Clodwig talk, but he was constrained from the feeling that he had intruded into a strange house, had there sat down as a guest, and yet all the time, he was intending to commit a theft. This made him ill at ease and reserved.

Eric took a different view of his deportment. He gave a fortunate turn to the conversation, referring to Goethe's poem which extolled America because it had no ruined castles, and passing on to the favorite pursuits of Clodwig and of Sonnenkamp, and indeed drawing a parallel between a fondness for antiquity and for the rearing of plants. Eric was very animated and communicative, introducing matters which he knew would awaken interest, and yet in the very midst of his talk there was an accompanying feeling of self-reproach. Until now, throughout his whole life, he had simply replied to questions put to him, and had always spoken either to impart something to others, or to enlighten them; now he was speaking with the view, at any rate with the secondary view, of appearing well, taking pleasure in the effect of this and that expression. He was startled when he became aware of it, and continued speaking further. He repelled the reproachful suggestion, saying to himself that it was really his duty to play the part of host. His eyes glistened, and he brought Sonnenkamp and Clodwig into a state of pleasant animation.

The ladies also received their share. But Bella had a manner, — and since she had it, it must be well-mannered, — when she was not leading the conversation, — no matter

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who was speaking, or what was spoken about, — a manner of introducing into the little circle, where it was a disturbing element, a dialogue with the person sitting next to her, and hindering him, even if he wished to do so, from falling into the general stream of conversation.

Eric had vanity enough to make him note her want of interest; it vexed him at first, but afterwards he thought no more about it.

Herr Sonnenkamp was very well satisfied with the family-tutor, who not only made a good appearance in his own sphere, and gave to him the rightful consideration, but whose very presence was an ornament of the house, and brought to his table the noblest of the land.

Clodwig again requested that he might be immediately informed of every remains of Roman Antiquities discovered in the restoration of the castle; Sonnenkamp promised it with readiness, and gave an extremely humorous account of the silly motives attributed to him for rebuilding the castle. Some said he wished to figure in "Bädeker's Traveller's Manual," which people carried with them in the summer season, when they passed up and down the river, so that the castle might be pointed at, and the bored English, with finger upon the line of the book, might gape at it awhile with open mouth; but that really an æsthetic reason determined him. He honestly confessed that he intended, in rebuilding the castle, to give a harmonious finish to the view from his work-room window, desiring at the same time to make some contribution to the beauty of the German fatherland.

There was always a peculiar tang in Sonnenkamp's utterance of these words, "German fatherland;" one could detect therein something like deep-seated savage hate, and yet the tone was rather that of tender pity and commiseration. Sonnenkamp knew that Clodwig was, of all things else, a patriot, and he was ready to strike this chord. Eric looked at Roland, to see if he noticed the hypocrisy, for it was no longer ago than Sunday, that Sonnenkamp had expressed himself so strangely and contemptuously, when the conversation turned on the subject of voting. But Roland's features were motionless.

In one view, it was encouraging that the inconsiderate mind of the youth did not perceive the contradiction; while in another, Eric saw here an enhancement of the difficulty of his work as an educator; it was indeed his principal problem, to awaken and to establish in the mind of his pupil the consecutiveness and interlinking of all thought and all action.

Sonnenkamp expatiated, too, on the many strange things imputed to him; and yet no one had really made the charge: but he himself, together with Pranken, had spread the report, that he was desirous of giving his own name to the castle, the line of the original family having long since become extinct. It was reported that the Rauhenberg coat of arms was not accurately known, and yet that it was purposed to place it again over the entrance of the restored castle.

Clodwig, who prided himself, notwithstanding all his liberality, in knowing the genealogy of all the princely and noble families, with their coats of arms, affirmed that the Rauhenberg coat of arms was unmistakably certain, and that it had as a device a Moor's head on a blue ground in the left field, and in the right, a pair of scales. The family had greatly distinguished itself in the crusades, and had been at that time invested with a high judicial function.

Sonnenkamp smiled in a very friendly manner, and he almost grinned, as he requested the count to favor him, as soon as possible, with a drawing.

Eric's rich store of knowledge was again a matter of surprise, as he excited attention by the information he gave concerning armorial mottoes.

They were in very good spirits whilst assigning to some one of their circle of acquaintance one and another motto, which sometimes seemed a laughable contrast to the real character, and sometimes a striking expression of it.

"What motto would you select for yourself?" Sonnenkamp asked Eric; and he gave for a reply these two simple words: —

"I serve."

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CHAPTER IX.

A DOUBLE RESCUE.

It happened, as if by accident, that Eric and Frau Bella walked together, and Bella tried a little experiment to see in what direction it would be safe to venture, by remarking that she was surprised at Eric's understanding her good husband so thoroughly, for it was not so easy to live with him as it seemed. She said this very warily, and it might be taken for simple praise. Eric replied: —

"The world is so much the more indebted to you, gracious lady, for the count has gained new youth through you."

Bella nodded. Eric had quietly and securely taken the first step toward a good understanding; to recognize her sacrifice was a delicate politeness on his part. She went on to speak very enthusiastically of Clodwig, and of her happiness in being able to do anything towards cherishing a pure spirit, without making any demand for herself. It was so beautiful to sacrifice one's self, to serve quietly, unrecognized and unnoticed; and here there came in a word about the childlike mind, so placed that Eric could apply all she had said to his vocation as a teacher.

Eric expressed his agreement with her, simply and without embarrassment, and Frau Bella could not tell whether he had really not understood her, or whether he chose to seem not to understand. She knew how to intimate with delicacy how difficult it was to deal with just such a man as Clodwig, though he seemed so unexacting and so yielding; she begged Eric to help her in making the evening of his days completely happy; she said all this with a tone of feeling which was not to be mistaken.

Eric expressed his doubt whether it would be well to disturb so peaceful a life by the introduction of a third person; he acknowledged that he was still wanting in tact, was capricious, and passionate.

"You are so sincere that you have no need of being diffident," answered Bella.

She looked searchingly at Eric; her fan fell, and as he picked it up she gave him her hand in thanks. With much tact and elegance of expression, but with emotion which made her breast heave, she extolled the good fortune which allowed her to devote herself to a noble man, and to have a friend who thoroughly understood her. Eric could not tell whether the latter part of her remark applied to him or to Clodwig.

"There he comes!" cried Bella suddenly. "See, it is a peculiarity of his never to carry a cane, though he needs it."

She went to meet her husband, and he turned his steps towards her. Clodwig seated himself under a fine cedar, where pretty rustic chairs were placed; Eric and Bella stood before him. And now Clodwig explained his whole plan, painting so attractively the pleasantly busy life which they would lead together, that Eric's cheeks glowed. In a voice full of emotion he expressed his gratitude, and said that he felt bound by duty to the decision which his heart had made.

Bella rested one hand on Clodwig's chair, and Eric went on to say that he rejoiced that anything so attractive had been offered him, because he derived thence an assurance that he had chosen the right course, that which accorded with his duty. A great and difficult task was laid upon him in Roland's education, and the very fact, that so different and charming a life was now opened to him, made him happy by renewing and confirming his confidence in his decision; and the offered alternative helped him to recognize his choice as a real duty.

For a while Clodwig looked down, and Bella, taking her hand from his chair, stood suddenly erect. Then, as Eric represented his delight in Roland, and the mysterious, happy attraction which he felt towards him, even towards his faults, Clodwig smiled, as he looked up into the branches, for just as Eric felt drawn to Roland with enthusiastic love, he was drawn to Eric; the sentiments were exactly analogous. Yet he was unwilling to give Eric up, and pointed out to him again that he could not cut off all other influences in educating Roland, but that he would have to contend with elements which perhaps he could never conquer.

"Ah, there comes the doctor," he interrupted himself; "are you willing to call in a third person to the decision?"

"No one but myself can make the decision," answered Eric, "however difficult it may be; but I have not the least objection to entrust the office of umpire to our friend."

This was done; but, to the surprise of all, the physician decided against both parties; he expressed his wish that some one would enable Eric to see Italy and Greece.

Before Clodwig could answer, Eric interposed, saying that he was bent on finding some employment, so that he could support himself and his mother from his own means.

Rising with difficulty, Clodwig said, —

"Young friend, give me your arm." He stood erect, and turned toward Eric, on whose arm his hand lay heavy and trembling.

"I don't know," said he, "I should not

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think I was the man who had been through such hard experience as I have; I am to-day undergoing a bitter experience. Is it old age which makes it so difficult for me to give up a desire? I have learned to do so before now. Yes, yes; a man becomes childish — childish; a child cannot give up."

He leaned heavily on Eric, who was shaken to the depth of his soul by the emotion of the noble man. He did not know what to reply, and Clodwig continued: —

"I feel as if I knew not where I am. Do you not think it is very close?"

"No. Will you not sit down?"

Hastily loosing his hold of Eric's arm to pass his hand over his face, Clodwig said,—

"My young friend, when I die —"

Hardly had he uttered the word, when he sank down; Eric caught him in his arms. Bella, who was walking behind with the physician, uttered a cry; the physician hurried to the spot; Eric stooped, raised Clodwig in his arms like a child — all this was the work of a moment.

Clodwig was carried into the great drawing-room, and laid upon a sofa. Bella sobbed aloud, but the doctor soothed her. He had a remedy with him which soon restored Clodwig to consciousness; he begged Eric and Bella to leave the room as soon as the count had spoken.

Outside, Bella threw herself on Eric's breast, and he trembled as he felt her breath on his face, and a thrill ran through him as the beautiful woman leaned upon him in such passionate and unrestrained excitement.

"You are our helper, our friend in need! O my friend, my friend!"

Sonnenkamp entered hastily, and Bella, standing erect, with wonderful composure addressed him, saying, —

"Herr Sonnenkamp! our mutual friend, Captain Dournay, is a blessing to us all; with the strength of a giant he carried my husband. Thank him with me."

Eric was astonished at this rapid recovery of self-control.

The physician came out, and Sonnenkamp asked anxiously, —

"How is he? how is he?"

His mind was set at rest by the doctor's declaration that it had been a very slight attack, which would have no bad consequences. Clodwig requested that Eric would come to him.

Eric entered the drawing-room. Clodwig sitting upright held out his hand to Eric, saying, with a wonderfully bright smile, —

"I must finish my sentence; I was going to say: When I die, my young friend, I should like to have you near me. But don't be anxious, it will not be for a long time yet. There, now sit down by me. Where is my wife?"

Eric went to call her, and she entered, with the physician and Sonnenkamp.

The doctor was not only willing, but expressly desired that Bella and Clodwig should return directly to Wolfsgarten. Sonnenkamp raised various objections, wishing to keep his noble guests with him, and saying with great hospitality, —

"Consider my house exactly as if it were your own."

"Will you permit Herr Dournay to accompany us?" asked Clodwig.

Sonnenkamp started as he answered quickly, —

"I have no permission to give the captain, but if you are determined to go, I would ask him as a favor to accompany you, with a promise of returning to us."

"You will go with us also?" begged Bella of the physician, who assented.

So the four drove off through the mild spring night; little was said, though once Clodwig seized Eric's hand, with the words, "You are very strong."

Eric and the doctor spent the night at Wolfsgarten. In the early morning, the physician prepared for departure while Eric was still sleeping soundly; he woke him and said, —

"Doctor, remain here to-day, but no longer."

Eric stared at him.

"Did you understand me?"

"Yes."

"Now, good-bye."

Again Eric spent a whole day at Wolfsgarten. Clodwig was as cheerful and serene as ever; Bella's bearing toward Eric was shy, almost timid.

In the evening Sonnenkamp and Roland rode over, and Eric returned with them to Villa Eden. Sonnenkamp was in very good spirits, and the blood mounted to Eric's face as he said, looking sharply at him, —

"Countess Bella will make a beautiful widow."

On the evening of the following day the physician appeared again at Villa Eden; he had been at Wolfsgarten and brought a good report. He took Eric aside, and said, —

"You have confided to me that you neither expect, nor will accept in a personal interview, a decisive answer from Herr Sonnenkamp. I approve of that; it can be much better settled by letter. You will see more clearly, away from him, and so will he. So I advise you to leave the

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house; every hour that you remain is your ruin."

"My ruin?" Eric was startled.

The physician said, smiling, —

"Yes, my dear friend, this forced exhibition of yourself, which has now lasted almost a week, is injuring you."

He continued, after a pause, —

"No man can be on parade for a week without receiving some harm. You must go away, or you will become an actor, or a preacher, or both together. You repeat what you have learned, and repeat it with the conscious purpose of producing a given effect. Therefore away with you! you have been examining, and examined, long enough. Come with me, spend the night at my house; to-morrow return to your mother, and wait quietly for what may come next."

"But Roland," asked Eric, "how can I leave the boy behind? His heart has turned to me, as mine has to him."

"That's well, very well. Then let him wait and long for you. Let him learn that the rich cannot have everything. Let him feel obliged to sue for you. All that will give you a power of incalculable influence in the family and over your pupil. Let me act for you now; to-morrow morning you will see with my eyes."

"There is my hand. I'll go with you!" answered Eric.

There was great surprise in the house when the announcement of Eric's sudden departure was made; an hour had scarcely elapsed when he entered the physician's carriage.

Eric was glad that his leave-taking of Roland was hurried. The boy could not understand what had happened; his emotion prevented him from speaking. After Eric had seated himself in the doctor's carriage, Roland came with one of the puppies and laid it in his lap, but the physician gave it back, saying that he could not take it, it was too young to be taken from the mother; but he would see that Eric should have it eventually.

Roland gazed wonderingly after the departing guests. In the boy's heart there was a confused whirl of all the feelings which he had experienced in the few days since Eric's arrival; but Eric did not look back. In his father's house the boy felt as if abandoned in a strange land. He took the young dog by the nape of the neck, and was about to throw it from him, but the puppy whimpered pitifully, and he pressed it to his breast, saying, — "Be quiet, nothing is hurting you; but I'm not a dog, and I don't whine, now don't you whine any more either. He didn't want either of us." Roland carried the dog to its mother, who was very glad to see her pup again.

"I'll go to my mother, too," said Roland; but he had first to be announced. She allowed him to enter, and when he lamented that Eric had gone so suddenly, she said, —

"That's right; I advised him to go."

"You? Why?"

"Oh, your stupid *why!* One can't be always answering your why!"

Roland was silent, and his mother's kiss almost pained him.

He wanted to go to his father, but found that he had driven to the castle with the Major.

Deserted and lonely, he stood in the court; at last he went into the stable, sat down by his dogs and watched their amusing actions; then he went to his horse, and stood quietly leaning on his neck for a long time. Strange thoughts rolled tumultuously through the boy's brain. The horse and dog are yours; only what one can buy and possess is his own.

Like a flash of lightning, just seen, then gone again, there woke in the boy's soul the idea that nothing but love can give one human being possession of another. He was not used to steady thinking, and this into which he had fallen brought on a real headache. He had his horse saddled, and rode off over the road which Eric and the doctor had taken.

CHAPTER X.

THE PRACTICAL NATURE.

Eric sat quiet and thoughtful by the doctor's side, and was disturbed by no word from him, seeming to himself to be driven hither and thither by wind and wave. A few days before, he had ridden to this place on a stranger's horse, and now he sat in a stranger's carriage; he had become intermingled with the life and destiny of so many persons, and this could no longer count for anything in his and their existence. He could not anticipate, however, that an unexpected event was awaiting him.

"You believe then in education?" asked the doctor at last.

"I don't understand what you mean."

"I place no dependence whatever on education; men become what nature fits them to be. They attain, under all relations, what is called their destiny. As the human being lies in his cradle, so he lies in his coffin. Some little help comes from talents and capabilities, but as a whole they

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are only incidental; the natural bias gives the home blow."

Eric had no heart to enter upon these discussions; he was weary of this everlasting game of words.

The doctor continued: —

"I have a peculiar grudge against these people; it vexes me that these rich people should buy for themselves the fragrant fruits of higher culture; then, again, I am consoled by the word of Him who stood at the very centre of thought, and said, 'A rich man cannot enter into the kingdom of God.' The rich are too heavily ballasted; they have a pampered existence, they are removed far from the actual needs of life, and they withdraw themselves from the natural influences of the seasons; they flit into different climates and out of them again, and everywhere they have comfortably prepared swallow-nests. It would be an intolerable heartlessness of fate, if, without any irksome toil, they are to have also the higher joys as a possession, which belong alone to us."

"There is no royal road to geometry, is Euclid's saying," Eric interposed; "science and knowledge are acquired only through labor, and what I want to do with this boy can all be comprehended in one word: I want to give him self-activity."

"Just so," replied the physician; "yes, that's it! we who live to the spirit have the advantage over the rich in this respect, that we are alone by ourselves; the rich man does not know the silent growth in the dewy stillness of solitude; he always has so much, he never has himself, and never himself alone. This is what I understand by that verse of the Bible, 'What shall it profit thee, if thou shalt gain the whole world, and lose thine own soul? That is to say, Art never alone in thyself, with thyself? He who has nowhere to lay his head, he can yet carry his head high and free. You see it was to some purpose that I studied theology for two years, until I came to see that though much cannot be effected, yet more is to be done by practising quackery on the body, than on the soul."

The doctor could not speak, he laughed so heartily. At last he said,—

"The great question always is, how receptivity itself confers upon one all that is desirable. That would be your principal task, to awaken and to perfect in Roland his power of receptivity. He must first of all, be taught in a regular way. In what he knows of the world, he is yet a child, and in what he desires of the world, he is a man, one may say a live man."

Eric had much to say in reply, but he smiled to himself, for he thought how easy it is to theorize. The doctor had justly found fault with him for enlarging upon so many topics, and now he was to perceive that he could be silent. He said nothing, and the doctor continued: —

"As to the rest, I can tender you effectual aid, if you conclude to accept the position. Pity that you are not a medical man; as I look at it, no one but a physician should be an educator. Have you taken notice that the young fellow has a poor digestion? a young man in these times ought to be able to digest pebble-stones! I cannot bring it about that only simple kinds of food should be given him. The noble and the rich eat without hunger, and drink without thirst. This young man can have everything but one real, substantial enjoyment. It is a small matter, but take it just for an example: Roland receives no enjoyment from new clothes. Now strike this joy out of your childhood, out of your youth. I must confess, that I can take pleasure for weeks in a well-fitting garment, as often as I put it on. What are you smiling at?" the physician interrupted himself.

"I am thinking of a theological friend," answered Eric. "How he would be astonished, if any one should say to him, that the fall, which brought with it the consciousness of nakedness, has become the very foundation of all the enjoyment that comes from weaving, making, and sewing clothes."

The doctor smiled too, but he stuck to his subject, and went on,—

"Food and clothes are of the greatest importance, but the third most important thing is sleep; it is the regulator of life. Air, nourishment, and sleep are the three fundamental conditions of vegetative life. I believe, captain, that I know something about you already, but I cannot pronounce a full verdict upon you, until I have seen you sleep. Our nineteenth century sleeps poorly; our education, our labor, and our politics ought to be so arranged that people can once more get better sleep. I should like to be able to write a history of sleep, showing how different nations and different ages have slept; that would lay bare to us the deepest roots of all the manifestations of civilization. As far as regards Roland, there is in him a strange blending of temperaments from the father's and the mother's constitution,"

The doctor pictured out the muscular organization of Sonnenkamp, and the struggle he was obliged to make every moment with his violent natural tendencies. "A cer-

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tain indomitable energy in him always enters a disclaimer against his mildness, which is at once seen to be a result of self-compulsion and of voluntary effort. He is a suppressed pugilist, and he has in fact, as he once himself boasted in an unguarded moment, an iron fist. The old Germans must have possessed this stalwart force, who, with their naked arms, overthrew and crushed the mail-clad Romans."

The physician laughed, and he could hardly succeed in narrating how, when he first saw Sonnenkamp, he always looked for the club which seemed to belong to such a man's hand. When he behaved in a friendly way, then it seemed always as if he said, Be quiet, I won't hurt you. And moreover, Sonnenkamp had a heart-disease, according to all pathologic signs, and he was obliged, therefore, to guard against every agitating emotion.

He cautioned Eric, particularly, not to make easy terms with Sonnenkamp when he came to a definite understanding, for if he did he would lose all hold upon him.

"You see," he said, "the priests, and we physicians, always give our masses and receipts in Latin; for who would gulp down for us sulphuric acid, if that were written on the paper in good German? So you will see that you can make an impression upon Herr Sonnenkamp only by a certain mysterious loftiness; otherwise he fancies that he can make quick work with you."

The doctor then gave a very humorous description of the sleepy existence of Frau Ceres, to whom the sharp-tongued, but still more envious Countess Wolfsgarten had given the epithet "crocodile," because she really had some of the traits of that monster as he basks in the sun. For Herr Sonnenkamp, there was no mode of activity in which he could let out his energies; and for Frau Ceres, there was no exertion that was not an effort. She was not really to be blamed for having her dress changed three times a day, without sticking in a single pin herself; that she walked about her chamber for hours together, looked at herself from every point of view, fed her parrot, played "patience," and cherished her nails. The poor creature ought always to live simply and naturally, but even those more highly endowed cannot do that. She was indeed weak and dependent, but she was also artful and capricious.

Eric was on the point of confiding to the doctor his interview with Frau Ceres, but before he could open his lips, the doctor began to narrate: —

"It may be now almost a year since an occurrence took place which I could not have believed possible. I was sent for to the villa. The daughter of the house was in a condition of muscular rigidity, and at the same time delirium, which I could not comprehend. Fräulein Perini told me that the girl had clasped her hands together so tightly, that they had been drawn apart only by the aid of two servants, although the girl herself opposed no resistance, and when I came the fingers were still clenched. I could never find out what extreme mental excitement could have produced such a condition of the body; I could only learn this much, that Herr Sonnenkamp had refused his wife something or other which she strongly desired. She revenged herself by confiding to her daughter, who had hitherto reverenced her father as a higher being, something which put the poor girl into this state of excitement. But when she recovered, she continued melancholy, until they sent her to the convent, where she gained new animation."

Eric turned the conversation to the reasons why Sonnenkamp was so much hated and calumniated. The physician readily took up the subject, and explained that the poor nobility looked out for every blemish as a natural defence against a man of such immeasurable wealth, who almost personally insulted them by his outlays. Herr von Pranken was the only one favorably disposed towards him, and he was so, not merely because he wanted to marry his daughter, but there was also a natural attraction to each other, for Herr Sonnenkamp was deeply interested in himself, and Herr von Pranken deluded his neighbor as himself. "And now, my friend," concluded the physician, "now see to it, how you come into this house with the right understanding."

"I have one request," Eric at last began. "Let me hear what you would say to a friend concerning me, if I were absent. Will you do that?"

"Certainly; this is what I intended to do. You are an idealist. Ah! how hard a time people have with their ideal! You idealists, you who are always thinking, toiling, and feeling for others, you seem to me like a landlord who has an inn on the road, or in some beautiful situation. He must get everything in readiness, and pray to God all the time: Send good weather and many guests! He himself cannot control either weather or guests. So the counsel is very simple. Don't be a landlord of the inn of ideality, but eat and drink, yourself, with a good zest, and don't think of others; they will themselves call for their own portion,

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or bring it with them in their knapsack; if not, they can go hungry and thirsty. I have found that there are only two ways of coming to terms with life: either to be wholly out with the world, or wholly out with one's self. The youth of to-day have yet a third way: it is to be at the same time out with the world and with themselves.

"That is, I am sorry to say, my case."

"And just for that reason," continued the doctor, taking off his huge glove, and laying his hand on Eric's shoulder, "just for that reason, I should desire for you some different lot — I don't know what — I cannot think of any."

A long row of wagons loaded with stripped beach-boughs came along the road. The physician gave the information that they had already extracted from these branches various chemical substances, and now they were carrying them to a powder-mill. Eric said that he knew it, that he had been ordered to a powder-mill in the mountains for a long time, and was employed there.

The doctor was silent, and looking up, he saw that some one was greeting him. An open carriage drawn by two dapple-gray horses came towards them, and a handsome young man, sitting in it and driving himself, was already bowing from a distance.

The doctor ordered his carriage to be stopped.

"Welcome!" he cried to the young man. They shook hands from their vehicles, and the doctor asked, —

"How are Louise and the children?"

"All well."

"Have you been to your mother's?"

"Yes."

"How are your parents?"

"They are well too."

The doctor introduced the young man as Herr Henry Weidmann, his sister's son-in-law.

"Are you the son of the Herr Weidmann whom I have so often heard of?"

"Most certainly."

"Where is your father now?" asked the doctor.

"Yonder there in the village; they are considering about establishing a powder-mill."

Something seemed to come into the doctor's mind like a flash; he turned quickly round to Eric, but did not utter a word. The young man asked excuse for his haste, as he was obliged to be at the station at a particular hour, and soon took leave.

The young Weidmann said hurriedly to Eric, that he hoped this would not be their last meeting, and that next time he hoped they would not pass each other in this way, and that his father would be glad to see him.

The two carriages drove on, each in its own direction.

The doctor informed Eric that his sister's son-in-law was a practical chemist, and he murmured to himself, —

"Trump called for, trump shown." Eric did not understand him; he thought, smiling, how Pranken had spoken of Weidmann's sons, with the impertinently white teeth.

The carriage drove on. Just as they were entering the next village, the steamboat from the upper Rhine came along; the doctor ordered the coachman to drive as rapidly as possible, in order to reach the landing in time. They went at a tearing gallop. The doctor cried, —

"I have it now! I have it now!" He struck Eric's arm at the same time, as if he were giving a blow upon the table that would make the glasses jingle, and he held it with no gentle grasp.

The carriage reached the landing just as the plank was thrown from it to the steamboat. The doctor got out quickly, and told the coachman to say to his wife that he would not be home until evening; then he took Eric by the arm, and went with him on board the boat. Only after it had got under way, could Eric ask him if he were going to visit a patient. The doctor nodded; he thought that he was safe in saying so, for he had a patient with him whom he was curing constitutionally.

The physician was immediately greeted by acquaintances on board, and a company around a punch-bowl invited him and his friend to join them; he touched glasses, but did not drink, for he said that he never took mixed drinks. The company was merry; a deformed passenger played upon an accordion, and accompanied the singing.

On the deck, at a little table upon which stood a bottle of champagne in a wine-cooler, the Wine-cavalier was seated, and opposite him was a handsome woman, with a great deal of false hair, and also peculiarly attractive charms of her own. They were smoking cigarettes, and chatting very fast in French. The Wine-cavalier avoided meeting the physician's eye, and the physician nodded to himself, as much as to say, "Good, a little shame yet left."

When they came in sight of the village which his son-in-law had mentioned, the doctor told Eric that he would now inform him directly that he was going with him to Weidmann's; *he* was the man who understood how to help him, and his advice was

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to be unconditionally followed. For a time Eric was perplexed, but then it appeared to him again as a strangely interesting thing, that now perhaps he was to pass through an entirely new and unanticipated examination. He and the doctor entered the boat which landed the passengers from the steamboat, and those on board, with glass in hand, bade them farewell; the steamboat was soon out of sight. Even the boatman knew the doctor, and said to him, greeting him in a familiar way, —

"You will find Herr Weidmann yonder in the garden."

They landed at the quiet village. Eric was introduced to Weidmann. He was a lean man, and, at first sight, seemed uninteresting; his features had an expression of quiet self-possession and intelligence, but in his gleaming eye lay a burning enthusiasm. Weidmann sat with several persons at a table, on which were papers, bottles, and glasses.

He nodded in a friendly way, and then turned to the persons with whom he had been conversing.

CHAPTER XI.

STRIVE TO MAKE MONEY.

It is not well to hear a man so much spoken of and praised, before seeing him face to face. It seemed incomprehensible to Eric how this man exerted such a wide influence, and impossible for himself to enter into his life. The doctor was immediately called away, for the landlord's father being sick, his arrival was regarded as very fortunate. Eric walked up and down the shore; he seemed to himself to be thrown into a strange world, and to be borne along by strange potencies. How long it was since he had left Roland, how long since he went by this village, which was then to him only a name! Now, perhaps, some eventful occurrence was to take place here, and the name of this village to be stamped indelibly upon his life.

"Herr Captain! Herr Weidmann wishes me to ask you to come into the garden," the boatman cried to him.

Eric went back into the garden, where Weidmann came to him, with an entirely different mien, saying that he would now, for the first time, bid him welcome; previously he had been very busy. A short time afterwards the doctor also came.

The three now seated themselves at the table in a corner of the garden, where there was an extensive prospect, and Weidmann began in a humorous way to depict "the heroic treatment" of the doctor's practice, who liked to deal in drastic remedies. A suitable point of agreement was established between Eric and Weidmann, while they united in a facetious, but entirely respectful assault upon the doctor.

Eric learned that the doctor had already proposed that he should undertake the superintendence of the powder-mill. Weidmann, in the meanwhile, explained that the difficulties were too great, and that the government threw in the way all sorts of obstacles, although they wanted principally to open a market in the New World, and with this view, his nephew, Doctor Fritz, had sent over from America, and had well recommended, one of the men with whom he had just been conversing. And his nephew desired that they would find some experienced German artillery officer, who would emigrate to America, and there take charge of a manufactory of gunpowder and matches, with the sure prospect of soon making a fortune.

The doctor looked towards Eric, but he smiled and shook his head in the negative.

Weidmann informed them further, that a discovery had been lately made of a deposit of manganese, and that they were desirous of forming a company to work the mine; that a man who knew how to regulate matters might easily make himself acquainted with the business.

He also looked inquiringly at Eric, and then made him the direct offer of a considerable salary, and an increasing share of the profits.

Eric declined, courteously and gratefully, as he had not entirely decided whether he would engage at all in any new pursuit. The doctor entered warmly into the matter, and extolled the superiority of our age, in which men of ripe scientific attainments devoted themselves to active employments, and, through their independent property, created a commonalty such as no period of history had ever before known.

"'This is ours, this is ours,' we commoners can say. Don't you think so?"

"Most certainly."

"Now then, go thou and do likewise."

And he added to this, how glad the Weidmann family would be to receive him into their circle.

Eric smilingly replied, that he felt obliged to decline this very friendly offer; that he valued very highly the independence which property gives, but was not adapted to a life of acquisition.

"Indeed?" cried the doctor, and there was something of contempt in his tone. "Do you know how the question of our age is put? It is, To use, or to be used?

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Why are you willing to be used by this Herr Sonnenkamp?"

"You surely would not want me to use other people, and appropriate to myself the product of their labor?"

"It is not well," interposed Weidmann, "to generalize in this way upon a wholly personal question. I see—I expected that the utter separation of the rich and the poor would vitally interest you; but here we have our doctor, and he will agree with me, that it is with the so-called social maladies as with those of the body. We know to-day, better than any period has ever known, the scientific diagnosis of disease, but we are ignorant of the specific remedy, and a disease must be known a long time, and known very thoroughly, before its method of cure is discovered; yet we must put up with it, in the meantime, and let it pass."

"Have you had no craving to be rich?" the doctor cried, apparently excited.

"It would be unwise to have a craving for what I cannot obtain through my own capabilities."

Weidmann's eye was quietly fixed upon Eric's countenance; the latter was aware of it, and whilst he thought, at this moment, that he could with a motion of his hand quietly relinquish all the offered riches of the world, the temptation came over his soul, What it would be for one to be free from all the cares of life, and to be able to devote himself to life itself; and he saw also how he could gratify every wish of his mother and his aunt.

But no; the first wish of his mother will be that he should remain true to himself. And the more Clodwig there, and here the physician, wanted to turn him aside from his vocation, so much the clearer was it to him, that he not only must abide by that vocation, but that he also had incurred a moral obligation to Roland.

Weidmann related that he had received a letter from New York, from his nephew, Doctor Fritz, who was going to send immediately his young daughter to be educated in Germany. The conversation now turned upon persons and things with which Eric was unacquainted.

The boatman came to inform them that the last steamboat was now coming up the river.

The doctor and Eric took hasty leave of Weidmann, who warmly shook Eric's hand, and requested him to claim his help in any situation in life where he could be of service.

The physician and Eric got into the boat and were rowed to the steamboat. Hardly a word was spoken by them during the passage to the town, where they were to disembark.

When they reached it, men and women were walking under the newly-planted lindens, for it is always a significant event of the day when the steamboat arrives, which remains here over night. The wife of the doctor was also at the landing, and she went homeward with Eric and her husband. She was very friendly to Eric, whom she had already met at Wolfsgarten; Eric, indeed, had no recollection of her, for at that time he had scarcely noticed, in fact, the modest, silent woman.

Many persons were waiting at the house for the physician. Eric was shown into his chamber, and then into the library; he was glad to see that the physician kept abreast with all the new investigations of his science, and he hoped through his help to fill up many a gap in his own knowledge.

The twilight came on; as Eric was sitting quietly in a large chair, he heard a horse trotting by the house. He involuntarily stood up, and looked out; he thought that the rider who had just passed was Roland, or had only his own imagination, and his continual thinking about the boy, deluded him?

There was an air of comfort in the physician's house, and everything gave evidence of solid prosperity; but the physician was obliged to go from the tea-table to a neighboring village.

Eric walked with the doctor's wife along the pretty road on the bank of the river, and there was a double satisfaction in her words, as she said that she greatly desired that her husband could have constant intercourse with such a mentally active friend as Eric, for he often felt himself lonely here in the town, and he was often obliged to depend wholly upon himself.

Eric was happy, for he perceived in this not only a friendly appreciation of himself, but also the deep and intelligent esteem of the wife, who would like to bestow upon her husband a permanent blessing.

CHAPTER XII.

A CHEERFUL LITTLE TOWN.

THERE was a genuine neighborly feeling among the inhabitants of this small town. People called out to friends who were standing at the windows and on the balconies, or walking in the streets; groups were formed, where much chatting and jesting went on, while from windows, here

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and there piano-playing and singing were heard.

The justice's wife and her daughter Lina joined Eric and his hostess. People were surprised that he was leaving Sonnenkamp's house, as the report had already spread that he was to remain there. And now Eric learned that Roland had really ridden through the town, passing several times before the physician's house, and letting his horse prance so that it frightened one to look at him.

Lina was burning with eagerness to speak to Eric alone for a moment, and she found her opportunity when they met the school-director and his wife, and the two elder ladies stopped to inquire about the health of the forester's wife, who lived in the director's house. Lina went on with Eric, and said abruptly: —

"Do you know that your pupil Roland has a sister?"

"Certainly. I have heard so."

"Heard so? Why, you have seen her. She was the young girl with the star on her forehead, and the wings, who met us in the twilight on the cloister steps."

"Ah, indeed!"

"Ah, indeed!" mimicked Lina. "Oh! you men are dreadful; I have always thought that you ——"

She stopped and Eric asked: —

"That I — what of me?"

"Ah, mother is right, I am too heedless and clumsy, and say everything that comes into my head; I should have believed you now ——"

"That you may do; it is a sin to be untrue, and a double sin to be so towards you."

"Well then," said Lina, taking off her straw hat, and shaking the curls in her neck, "well then, if you will honestly confess, that Manna made an impression on you at that time, I will tell you something; but you must be frank and sincere."

"My dear young lady, do you think I would say no? You tempt me not to be sincere."

"Well then, I'll tell you — but please keep it to yourself won't you? — Manna asked me who you were, and that's a great deal from her. Oh, Herr Captain, wealth is a dreadful thing; people offer themselves only for the sake of a girl's money — no, I didn't mean to say that — but try to manage that Manna shall not be a nun."

"Can I prevent it?"

"Did you see the wooden shoes that the nuns wore? Horrid! Manna would have to wear those shoes, and she has the prettiest little foot."

"But why shouldn't she be a nun, if she wants to?"

Lina was puzzled, she was not prepared for such an answer. She remembered, too, that she was a good Catholic.

"Ah," she said plaintively, "I fancied to myself — I am a silly child, am I not? — in old times a knight used to enter a castle disguised as a squire or something else — well, I thought now the squire must be a tutor and then —"

She could not go on with her fancy sketch, for her mother overtook them, rather anxious lest her daughter had made some of her dreadfully simple speeches in her walk with the stranger.

"May one know what you are talking about so earnestly?" asked the Justice's wife. Lina drew a long breath, and put her hat-elastic in her mouth, which her mother had often forbidden, as Eric answered with great unconcern,—

"Your daughter has been reminding me that I was not very attentive when we first met on the convent island. I must ask your pardon now, madame. It relieves my mind of a burden of self-reproach to have the opportunity of excusing myself to you, and I earnestly beg that you will carry my apologies to your husband. One meets in travelling so many people who think to make themselves of importance by being ill-tempered, that one catches the unfriendly spirit, and harms himself the most. If I had not had the good fortune to meet you again, a little misunderstanding would have remained between us. Ah! on such a beautiful evening, by your beautiful river, where people are so friendly and cheerful, one longs to do some good to every one he meets, and to say, Rejoice with me, dear fellow-mate, dancing in the sunlight, for the little time which is called life."

Eric was very animated, and the Justice's wife much pleased with his demeanor. The evening walk was most refreshing. Lina directly gave up to her mother the place next Eric, and walked on the other side of the doctor's wife. The walk lasted a long time, till the doctor's carriage was heard in the distance by his wife, who knew the sound of its wheels before the others could distinguish anything.

The doctor joined them with a fresh fund of cheerfulness, saying,—

"I was sent for to receive a confession, and now I have lost an excellent reminder."

He went on to tell them that a man had lived in the next village, the sight of whom

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had always given him a stab in the heart, for the man had sworn a false oath about a hundred florins which he owed him. But as time went on, he had become quite grateful to this person for serving him as a reviver of his faith, because every time he met him he felt a fresh belief in the meanness of mankind, which one easily forgets. Now, before his death, the man had confessed to him and given back the money. So here he was, a hundred florins richer, but he had lost his faith. How could he laugh now at the world, if he had no longer the meanness of men to laugh at?

"What will you do now with the hundred florins?" asked Lina.

"What would you do with them?"

"I don't know."

"What would *you* do, captain?" said the physician, turning suddenly to Eric; "what would you do, if you had a million to give away?"

"I?" asked Eric, somewhat taken aback. He did not understand the reason of the sudden question.

"Yes, you."

"I never thought about it, but first I would found valuable scholarships at all the German universities. The man of wealth ought to be able to reflect how he is cultivating the mind of the man of genius."

"Good," answered the doctor, "every one thinks first of his own circle. Here's my little friend Lina; if she had a million to give away, she would spend it all on blue muslin, and dress all the female world in it. Wouldn't you, Musselina?"

Lina was silent, and her mother said, "Give some smart answer; can't you think of one?" Lina apparently could not think of one, but there was a pleasant, merry tone in the intercourse between the doctor and the child.

After their friends left them, the doctor said to Eric, —

"You can become familiar with a new method of instruction here. The Justice's lady tries with all her might to make her daughter a pert, worldly chatterbox, but fortunately the child has a simple, genuine nature which can't be spoiled, and when you talk with her alone she is full of bubbling life, and rightly deserves the name of Musselina."

The doctor was more friendly than ever in his bearing towards Eric, for he saw that he had wished to interfere in his life too hastily and roughly. He expressed regret that Eric had not seen Herr Weidmann to advantage that day, as the latter had been preoccupied, or something had gone wrong with him, and he advised Eric not to adopt a wrong impression in regard to him. The doctor smiled, well pleased, when Eric replied that he should not allow himself to form an opinion of a view on the Rhine which every one admired, if he had seen it only through rain or mist. The physician had evidently been thinking much of Eric during his drive; he always addressed him to-day as Herr Captain in a very marked manner, and he explained this when he held out his hand in bidding him good-night, by saying,—

"You are the first soldier with whom I have ever been able to live quite comfortably. With all other officers, I have always had a feeling of — I can't say fear, exactly — but a certain consciousness of being unarmed in the presence of an armed man. You soldiers always have an air of preparation, of readiness for attack, in which there's much that's good. I take back my words; perhaps a soldier can be a still better educator than a physician. Well, good-night!"

When Eric was alone, everything vanished which he had seen or experienced during the day, and Roland's form alone remained before him. He tried to fancy what the boy's thoughts were in riding after him. He sought to transport himself into the boy's state of feeling; he could not entirely do so, for Roland was full of anger with Eric, for deserting one who was so truly and fondly devoted to him. The boy felt as if he had been robbed, and so he rode over to the town fancying that Eric must be coming to meet him, or must be watching for him at the window; he rode back weeping with anger.

The world, of which he was to possess so much, appeared to him worthless and strange, while it seemed to Eric, who had nothing but his own thoughts, bathed in a dew of blessing. In the stillness of the night he thought over the hospitable and homelike reception he had met from Clodwig, and now from the physician, and hospitality seemed to him the purest fruit of noble manhood. In ancient times men entertained gods and angels, and they still entertained them, for in freely offering what one has to a stranger, whose very existence was yesterday unknown, the divine is unfolded in the pure soul.

Up yonder at Wolfsgarten, Eric had met with a fatherly good-will, based upon congeniality of thought — here with the doctor, as much goodwill as difference of opinion; but here, too, that personal friendliness which is so satisfying and home-like.

There was Bella who always wished to make an impression in her own behalf, and

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here was the doctor's wife, who wished nothing for herself, who thanked Eric in her heart, and wished only that her husband might have the good fortune to be able to talk over learned subjects with another man. And were these many forms, were all these events, to be only the passing occurrences of a journey?

CHAPTER XIII.

AGAIN ALONE WITH THYSELF.

"In the morning," the doctor often said, "I am like a washed chimney-sweeper." He rose, summer and winter, at five o'clock, studied uninterruptedly several hours, and answered only the most pressing calls from his patients. Through this practice of study he not only kept up his scientific knowledge, but as he bathed his body in fresh water, so was he also mentally invigorated; let come what would of the day, he had made sure of his portion of science. And that was the reason — we may congratulate ourselves upon knowing this secret — that was the reason why the doctor was so wide awake, so ready primed, and so vivacious. He himself designated these morning hours to an old fellow-student as his camel-hours, when he drank himself full, so that he could often refresh himself with a draught in the dry desert. And life, moreover, did not seem to him a desert, for he had something which thrived everywhere, and was all-prevailing, and *that* was an indestructible cheerfulness, and an equanimity, which he attributed above all to his sound digestion.

So was he sitting now; and when he heard Eric, whose room was over his study, getting up, he sent word to him to come soon to breakfast; and in this hour the freshness of the man was yet wholly unimpaired. His wife, who had to be busy, or rather, who made herself busy about household matters, in order not to oblige her husband to enter into any conversation on less learned matters, had soon gone into the garden, in which flourished many scions and seeds of various kinds out of Sonnenkamp's garden. But the doctor conversed with Eric upon no scientific topics.

In the breakfast-room there hung portraits of the parents and the grand-parents of the physician, and he took occasion to give some account of his own life. His grandfather and father had been boat-men, and the doctor had been present at the golden wedding of both, and expressed his hope to celebrate also his own. And after he had portrayed his own struggle with life, he proceeded to ask Eric about his pecuniary affairs, and those of his mother.

Eric disclosed the whole state of the case; he described how his mother had noble and rich friends, on whom she placed great expectations, but he did not believe in, and to speak honestly, he did not desire, any help of that sort. The doctor asserted in confirmation, that no one would help them substantially and handsomely; he unfolded, as he went along, wholly heretical views upon beneficence; he expatiated upon the nonsense of leaving endowments and legacies in one's will, and on scattering small donations. He thought it was much handsomer, and more permanently beneficial, to make an individual or a family entirely independent, so that they may thereby be the means of accomplishing greater good. He stated that he had often attempted to bring this about; nothing of this kind was to be effected with Herr Sonnenkamp, who would have nothing further to do with people into whose hat he had cast an alms.

The conversation, in this way, having once more turned upon Sonnenkamp, the doctor offered to take upon himself all the external financial arrangements with Sonnenkamp, insisting upon Eric's consent to his doing so.

"And do you take no farther trouble about this man," said the doctor, opening an egg. "See, it is all a fair exchange. We devour this egg with the greatest zest, while the hen got her living out of the manure-heap."

Eric was happy with this lively, practical man. He expressed his satisfaction that, here in this little town, there were so many noble persons, who could constitute a rich social environment. The doctor contested this, for he considered that the necessity of being thrown upon one another, and the not being able to make a selection, as one can do in a great city, belittled, contracted, and created gossip. One had, indeed, in a great city, no larger circle than was here formed for the direct participation in the various duties of life, but the necessity of contracting marriages within such a limited circle did not permit the existence of a free social community.

"On the whole," he said in conclusion, "we are no more to each other than a good whist-party."

It was time to think of departing. Eric left the house with a feeling of serene satisfaction. The doctor drove him to the nearest railroad station, where he got out and warmly shook Eric's hand, repeating the wish that they might be able to live together.

The train, meanwhile, stopped longer than

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usual at the little station, waiting the arrival of the train from the lower Rhine which was behind time. A merry crowd of men, young and old, greeted the doctor and seated themselves in the same car with Eric. The doctor told him that they were wine-testers, who were going to a sale which was to take place to-day at the wine-count's cellar. He called Eric's attention specially to a jovial-looking man, the gauger, the finest judge of wine in the district. The doctor laughed heartily when Eric said to him, that he had also gone about the whole district testing wines, that is, the spiritual wine of character.

"Strange how you make an application of everything!" laughed the physician. "Count Wolfsgarten, Pranken, Bella, Sonnenkamp, the huntsman, Sevenpiper, Musselina, Weidmann, Fräulein Perini, the Major, the priest, I, and Roland — a fine specimen-catalogue of wines. Look out that you do not stagger as you come out of the wine-cellar."

The doctor suddenly turned round, and cried: —

"You may yet induce me to put something in print. I am verily of the opinion, that though there must be some consumers who are not producers, there are no graduated German heads that don't want, at some time or other, to write a book; perhaps that helps them to study. And when you come again, you will, perhaps, bring me to the point of writing my history of sleep."

The train from the lower Rhine whistled, and the doctor, grasping Eric's hand again, said with emotion, —

"We are friends! take notice, that if either one of us is to be no longer the other's friend, he pledges himself to give a week's notice. And now farewell."

The last word was cut off, for the locomotive whistled, and Eric set out towards home.

He was sitting with downcast eyes when he heard some one in the car say, —

"There's young Sonnenkamp on horseback!"

Eric looked out, and caught one more glimpse of Roland, just as he disappeared behind a little hill.

Eric heard nothing of the lively talk, often interrupted by loud laughter, which the wine-party kept up; he had much in the past and future to think over, and he was glad when the party left the car at the next station, and he remained alone. He felt some repentance, and some doubt whether he had not acted wrongly and unwisely in not concluding an arrangement with Sonnenkamp, but he soon took courage again and cast his regret behind him.

We are rapidly rolled along by the power of steam. And in spirit? How far are we masters of our destiny?

At several stations, school-boys, with their satchels on their backs, entered Eric's car. He learned, in answer to his questions, that they lived with their parents in country-houses and distant villages, but went every day to school in the city, returning home in the evening. Eric thought long on the new race of youths which is growing up; taking their places in the noisy railway-train in the early morning, then assembling for instruction, and going home again over the railroad; these boys must and will learn to guard, in the restlessness and tumult of the new age, their own inner life, which is, indeed, quite different from ours. And then he looked farther on into a future, when the alarming growth of the great cities shall cease, and men shall again live outside of them, where the green fields, the rushing streams, and the blue sky shall be daily before their eyes, and yet it shall be granted them to make their own the elements of culture, and all which is now supplied by the union of men in large towns. Then again will country air force its way into the soul.

At the time when Eric and the doctor were setting out, the justice's wife sat with her husband and her daughter over their morning coffee. The conversation turned on the evening walk with Eric, and the lady repeated his frank apologies.

"Very good, very good," said the justice. "He is polite and clever, but it's well that he has gone; he's a dangerous man."

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BOOK IV. CHAPTER I.

THE STRUGGLE IN A CHILD'S HEART.

THE sparrows in the alders and willows on the shore of the convent-island twittered and chattered noisily together, they had so much to say to each other about what they had experienced during the day; and who knows whether their to-day was not a much longer interval of time than ours? One puffed up by his experience — perhaps we should say *her* experience, for the feathers had lost their colors from age — sat quietly in the crotch of a bough, comfortably resting against the trunk; he echoed and re-echoed his delight at the splendid time he enjoyed over the river, under the closely-trimmed branches of a shady linden, in the vineyard by the shore.

The waiter there had long delayed removing the remnants of an English breakfast, and there were cakes, the pieces, alas! too large, abundance of eggs, honey, and sugar; it was a feast without parallel. He considered that the real joy of existence had its first beginning when one wished to know nothing more of all other things, and had supreme satisfaction in eating and drinking alone. Only in mature life did one really come to that perception.

Others would listen to nothing from the swaggering fellow, and there was an irregular debate, whether lettuce-seeds or young cabbage-heads were not much better than all the cooked-up dishes of men. A young rogue, fluttering around his roguish mate, reported to her that behind the ferryman's house, there hung from the garret-window a bulging bag full of flax-seed; if one only knew how to rip open the seam a little, one could gradually eat up all the tidbits, but it must be kept a profound secret, else the others would come too; and hemp-seed, it must be acknowledged, was just the most precious good which this whole round earth could furnish. The rogue was of the opinion that her delicate bill was exactly the nice thing to pick open the seam; it was the most contemptible baseness in human beings, to hang up in the open air just the most tempting dainties all fastened and tied up.

A late-comer, flying up in breathless haste, announced that the scarecrow, standing in the field, was nothing but a stick with clothes hung upon it.

"Because the stupid men believe in scarecrows, they think that we do too," laughed he, and flapped his wings in astonishment and pity at the manifest simplicity.

There was a frantic bustle in the alders and willows, and almost as frantic in the great meadow, where the girls from the convent caught hold of each other, chattered together, tittered, teased one another, and laughed.

Apart from her noisy companions, and frequently passing under the alder-trees where there was such a merry gathering of the birds, walked a girl slender in form and graceful in movement, with black hair and brilliant eyes, accompanied by a tall and majestic woman in a nun's dress, whose bearing had an expression of quiet and decisive energy. Her lips were naturally so pressed together, that the mouth seemed only a narrow streak of red. The entire brow was covered with a white kerchief, and the face, the large eyes, the small eyebrows, the sharp nose, the closely pressed lips, and the projecting but rather handsome chin, had something commanding and immovable.

"Honored mother," began the maiden, "you have read the letter from Fräulein Perini?"

The nun — it was the superior — only turned her face a little; she seemed to be waiting for the maiden — it was Hermanna Sonnenkamp — to speak further.

As Manna, however, was silent, the superior said: —

"Herr von Pranken is then to make us a visit. He is a man of good family and good morals, he seems a wordling, but he is not one exactly. He has, indeed, the impatience of the outside world; I trust, however, that he will not press his wooing as long as you are here our child, that is to say, the child of the Lord."

She spoke in a very deliberate tone, and now stopped.

"Let us go away from here; the noise of the birds above there allows one hardly to hear herself speak."

They went by the churchyard, in the middle of the island, to the grove growing near a small rocky ledge, which the children called the Switzerland of the island; there they sat down, and the superior continued: —

"I am sure of you, my child, that you will decline hearing a word from Herr von Pranken that has any reference to protestations of love, or to the soliciting your hand in marriage."

"You know, honored mother," replied Manna, — her voice was always pathetic, and as if veiled with tears, — "you know, honored mother, that I have promised to take the veil."

"I know it, and I also do not know it,

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for what you now say or determine is for us like a word written in the sand, which the wind and the footsteps of man may efface. You must go out again into the world; you must have overcome the world, before you renounce it. Yes, my child! the whole world must appear to you like your dolls, which you tell me of, — forgotten, valueless, dead, — a child's toy, upon which it is scarcely conceivable that so much regard, so much love, should be lavished."

For some time all was still, nothing was to be heard but the song of the nightingale in the thicket, and above the river ravens were flying in flocks and singing — men call it croaking — and soaring to their nests in the mountain-cliffs.

"My child," began the superior, after a while, "to-day is the anniversary of my mother's death; I have to-day prayed for her soul in eternity, as I did at that time. At the time she died — men call it dying, but it is only the birth into another life — at that time, my vow forbade me to stand by her death-bed; it cost me hardly a struggle, for whether my parents are still out there in the world, or above there in heaven, it makes no difference to us. Look, the water is now tinged with the glow of evening, and people outside, on the hills and on the banks, are speaking in raptures of nature, that new idol which they have set up, for they are the children of nature; but we are to be the children of God, before whose sight all nature seems only a void, under whatever color it may appear, whether clothed in green, or white with snow."

"I believe, I comprehend that," Manna said assentingly.

"That is why I say it to you," continued the worthy mother. "It is a great thing to overcome the world, to thrust it from one's self, and never to long for it a single instant, and to receive in exchange the eternal blessedness, even while we dwell here in the body. Yes, my child," she laid both hands upon the head of Manna, and continued, "I would like to give you strength, my strength — no, not mine, that which God has lent me. Thou art to struggle hard and bravely with the world, thou art to be tried and sifted, before thou comest to us forever, to the fore-court of the Kingdom of Heaven."

Manna had closed her eyes, and in her soul was the one only wish, that now the earth might open and swallow her up, or that some supernatural power would come and lift her up over all. When she opened her eyes, and saw the marvellous splendor of the sunset sky, the violet haze of the mountains, and the river glowing in the red beams of evening, she shut her eyes again, and made a repellant movement with her hand, as if she would have said, — I will have nothing of thee; thou shalt be naught to me; thou art only a doll, a lifeless thing, on which we waste our love.

With trembling voice Manna mourned over her rent and tempest-tossed spirit; a few days before, she had sung and spoken the message of the heralding angels, while dark demons were raging within her. She had spent the whole day in prayer, that she might be worthy to announce such a message, and then in the twilight a man had appeared before her, and her eye had rested on him with pleasure; it was the tempter who had approached her, and the figure had followed her into her dreams. She had risen at midnight, and wept, and prayed to God that he would not suffer her to fall into sin and ruin. But she had not conquered. She scorned and hated the vision, but it would not leave her. Now she begged that some penance might be imposed upon her, that she might be allowed to fast for three days.

The superior gently consoled her, saying that she must not blame herself so bitterly, because the self-reproach increased the excitement of fancy and feeling. At the season when the elders were in bloom and the nightingales sang, a maiden of seventeen was apt to be visited by dreams; Manna must not weep over these dreams, but just scare them away and mock at them; they were only to be driven off by ridicule.

Manna kissed the hands of the superior.

It became dark. The sparrows were silent, the noisy children returned to the house, and only the nightingale sang continually in the shrubbery. Manna turned back to the convent, the superior leading her by the hand. She went to the large dormitory, and sprinkled herself with holy water. She continued praying silently long after she had gone to bed, and fell asleep with her hands folded.

The river swept rustling along the valley, and swept rustling by the villa where Roland slept with contemptuously curled lip; it rushed past the streets of the little town where Eric was speculating upon this and that in the doctor's house; it rushed by the inn where Pranken, leaning against the window, stared over at the convent.

The moon shone on the river, and the nightingales sang on the shore, and in the houses thousands of people slept, forgetting joy and sorrow, until the day again dawned.

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CHAPTER II.

A GREEN TWIG.

On the west side of the convent, under the lofty, wide-spreading, thickly-leaved chestnut-trees, beeches, and lindens, and far in among the firs with their fresh shoots, stationary tables and benches were arranged. Girls in blue dresses were sitting here, reading, writing, or busy with their hand-work. Sometimes there was a low humming, but not louder than the humming of the bees in the blossoming chestnut-trees; sometimes a moving this way and that, a change in one's position, but not more than the fluttering of a bird in the trees overhead.

Manna sat at the table beneath a large fir-tree, and at a little distance from her, on a low seat under a lofty beech on whose trunk many names were carved, and on which was suspended a framed picture of the Madonna, sat a little child; she looked up frequently at Manna, who nodded to her, indicating that she must study her book more diligently, and be as busy as the rest. The child was nicknamed Heimchen, because she had suffered so much from homesickness, and Heimchen had become the pet of all the girls. Manna had cured the child, to all appearance at least, for on the day after the representation of the sacred play, she had received permission from a lay-sister who presided over the gardening, to prepare for the child a separate little garden-plat; and now she seemed to be taking root in the foreign land, as did the plants which she had since watered and cared for, but she was inseparable from Manna.

Manna worked diligently; some pale blue paper was lying before her, and she was painting on it, with a fine brush, pictures of the stars in color of gold from small shells.

She prided herself especially on having the neatest writing-books, every leaf ruled very regularly with lines close together, and uniformly written upon, neither too coarse nor too fine. Manna had received, a few days since, the highest mark of honor ever conferred on a pupil, by being unanimously made the recipient of the blue ribbon, which the three classes of the children, namely, the children of Jesus, the angels of Mary, and the children of Mary, had adjudged to her. There had hardly been any election, so much a matter of course did it seem that nobody but Manna could be designated for the blue ribbon. This badge of distinction gave her a sort of right to be considered a superior.

While she was thus drawing, and frequently running her eye over the children left under her care, she had a book open by her side; it was Thomas à Kempis. While putting in the stars, which she did with that delicate and beautiful finish attainable, perhaps, only in the convent, she snatched a few sentences out of Thomas à Kempis, that her soul might be occupied with higher thoughts during this trifling occupation.

The stroke of oars sounded from the shore on that side: the girls looked up; a handsome young man was standing in the boat, who lifted his hat and waved it, as if saluting the island.

"Is he your brother? your cousin?" was whispered here and there.

No one knew the stranger.

The boat came to land. The girls were full of curiosity, but they dared not intermit their work, for everything had its allotted time. Luckily, a tall, fair-complexioned maiden had used up all her green worsted, so that she must go to the convent for more, and she nodded significantly to the others that she would find out who was the new arrival. But before the blond girl could come back, a serving-sister appeared, and informed Manna Sonnenkamp that she was to come to the convent. Manna arose, and Heimchen, who wanted to go with her, was bidden to remain; the child quietly seated herself again on her little stool under the beech-tree from which hung the picture of the Madonna. Manna broke off a little freshly-budding twig from the tree under which she had been sitting, and placed it in her book as a mark; she then followed the sister.

There was great questioning among those who remained: Who is he? Is he a cousin? But the Sonnenkamps have no relatives in Europe. Perhaps a cousin from America.

The children were uneasy, and seemed to have no longer any inclination for their studies. Manna had given to a companion the blue sash which she wore on her right shoulder, and this one felt it incumbent on her to keep strict order.

Manna came to the convent. As she entered the reception-room, to find the lady-superior, Otto von Pranken rose quickly and bowed.

"Herr von Pranken," said the superior, "brings you a greeting from your parents and Fräulein Perini."

Pranken approached Manna, and extended his hand, but as she had the book in her right hand, she gave him in a hesitating manner her left. Pranken, the fluent talker, only stammered out — for Manna's appearance had greatly impressed him

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— the expression of his satisfaction at seeing Manna so well and so much grown, and of the joy it would give her parents and Fräulein Perini to see her again, so much improved.

The stammering manner of Pranken, moved as he was by repressed feeling, lasted while he continued to speak further; for in the midst of his involuntary agitation, he became suddenly aware that this evident emotion could not fail to be noticed by Manna, and must produce some impression upon her. He skilfully contrived to keep up the same tone with which he had begun, and congratulated himself on his ability to play so well a bashful, timid, and surprised part. He had many animating narratives to give of her family at home, and congratulated the maiden on being allowed to live on a blissful island until she could return to the mainland, where a pleasant company of friends formed also a social mainland. Pranken contemplated with a great deal of self-satisfaction this comparison, as pretty as it was new.

Manna did not say a great deal; at last she asked,—

"Who may this Captain Dournay be, of whom Roland writes to me so enthusiastically?"

Pranken winced a little, but he said smilingly,—

"I was so fortunate as to find a poor young man to instruct our Roland — permit me to speak of him so, for I love him like a brother — in a variety of matters. I think that it will do Roland no harm to acquire information from the man."

"Roland writes me that he is an intimate friend of yours."

"Herr Dournay has probably said so to him, and I will not contradict it, if Roland is thus led to entertain a higher respect for a teacher. But, my dear Fräulein, I may venture to say to you that I am somewhat sparing in the use of the word friend, and I would therefore rather not —"

"Then tell me something of the character of this man who calls himself your friend."

"Excuse me from giving the particular details. You yourself will certainly agree with me, that it is our duty to help toward the good one who is striving to turn from the error of his ways, even if we cannot wholly blot out the past."

"What, then, has this Herr Dournay done?" interposed the superior. "I should be sorry on his mother's account, who was a companion of my youth; she is a Protestant, to be sure, but she is what the world calls good and noble."

Pranken appeared perplexed, but with a motion of the hand which implied careful consideration, kind intentions, and a sort of delicate reservation, he said, looking down at the floor,—

"Honored mother, and dear Fräulein! Spare me from making such a statement here in the convent, and consider what I have touched upon as if it had not been said. When I look around me here — as little ought certain words, not perhaps so inappropriate in the world outside, to be spoken aloud in this pure air, as unsaintly pictures, to use a mild expression, to hang by the side of the pious, transfigured forms upon these pure walls. Permit me to say to you, I have special guaranties that the poor young man will not conduct himself unworthily."

Manna's countenance suddenly assumed an expression of noble indignation as she said,—

"But I cannot conceive how they can commit my brother to the charge of a man, who —"

Pranken prayed to be excused for interrupting her. He conjured her by what was high and holy, to forget that he, in his zeal for the truth, had said anything against a former comrade; he had done it involuntarily in his contemplation of purity and loveliness. He besought so earnestly, he manifested so good a heart, so full of human love, that Manna now voluntarily extended to him her hand, and said,—

"I believe you. Ah, how rejoiced I am you are so good!"

Pranken was happy, but determined that Eric should not be received into the family. It seemed more and more puzzling to him that he should himself have raised up such an antagonist; he was now doubly out of humor with Eric, for he had been the occasion of his being untrue and unjust, and Pranken was too proud to be so misled, especially when a little caution on his own part might have prevented the necessity of it.

"Might I venture to request you to show me the lines?" he now said. "My object is to see how good a judge of men Roland has become. Would you be willing to show me what our splendid brother has written of this Herr Dournay?"

Manna blushed, and replied that they had better say no more about the captain; and she besought Pranken to do all he could to remove the man out of the house, if it were still a possible thing. Pranken promised to do all in his power, and he recovered his natural elasticity while he prayed Manna, in a lively tone, but sub-

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duced to the proprieties of the place, that instead of giving him so easy a task, she would commission him, like a knight of the good old times, to contend against the dragon-brood. And yet, while calling it easy, he felt in his own heart that the task could not rightly be called so.

The superior rose; she thought that it was high time, and a good time, too, to break off the conversation. Pranken had renewed his acquaintance, and that must suffice for the present. The superior was not so resolutely bent upon the convent for Manna, as to desire that Pranken might not win her affections. Such a house and such a family, endowed with such incredible wealth, might be of great advantage to the convent and to the Church.

"It was very kind in you to visit us," she now said. "Carry my greeting, I pray, to your sister, the Countess Bella, and say to her that she is remembered in my prayers."

Pranken saw that he was expected to take leave, and yet he wanted to say something more definite, and to hear some word which should give him the desired security. His countenance suddenly lighted up, as he said, with such modesty and such friendly feeling that one could not refuse compliance, —

"Fräulein Manna! We erring creatures outside like to have a lasting token in our hands."

"What do you want?" quickly and sharply struck in the superior.

"Honored mother! I would beseech you," Pranken said, turning quickly with humble mien toward the severe lady, "I would beseech you to permit Fräulein Sonnenkamp to give that book into my hand."

"Wonderful!" cried Manna, "I wanted to do that! I wanted to give it to you to carry to my brother. Ask him to read every day a chapter, beginning from the place where the green twig is put, so that he may receive every day the same thoughts into his soul that I do."

"What happiness this harmony of feeling, this oneness of sentiment, gives me! It would be a profanation to try to describe it!"

The superior was at a loss what to do, and Pranken continued: —

"I beseech you, then, my honored Fräulein, to pardon my presumption; I would like to request you to give me this holy book for my own edification, and that I too may be allowed to keep even step with your brother and you."

"But my name is written in the book," said Manna, blushing.

"So much the better," Pranken wanted to say, but luckily he was able to withhold it; he turned to the superior, folded his hands, and stood as if praying her to grant his petition. The superior nodded her head several times, and at last said, —

"My child, you may, perhaps, comply with this request of Herr von Pranken. And now, farewell."

Pranken received the book. He left the convent. As he sat in the boat, the ferryman said to him, —

"Perhaps some maiden over there is betrothed to you?"

Pranken did not reply, but he gave the ferryman a whole handful of money. His heart throbbing with bliss, Pranken rushed up the bank, and immediately sent a telegram to his sister.

CHAPTER III.

HERCULES IN A HAIR-DRESSER'S SHOP.

The telegraphist was very much astonished, but did not dare to express his surprise, when the handsome, noble young man, with the polished exterior and the unassuming air, through which there was plainly discernible a feeling of condescension towards a public officer, handed in a telegram mysteriously worded, and running thus: —

"God be praised! a green twig from the island of felicity. New genealogical tree. Heavenly manna. Endless possessions. A consecrated one, new-born.

"Otto von Pranken."

Pranken walked about in the tasteful, well-arranged grounds of the station, looked up to the mountains, down to the river, to the island; the whole world was as if freshly created to him, he seemed to himself in a new earth; a veil was removed from everything, and all was ravishingly beautiful. In a copse, where no one saw him, he knelt down; and while he knelt he felt inexpressibly happy, and as if he never wished to rise again. He heard a noise in his vicinity, stood upright, and brushed his knees carefully. It was nothing but a beggar that disturbed him. Without waiting to be spoken to, Pranken gave him a considerable sum of money, and after the beggar had gone away, he called him back and gave him as much again.

The air was loaded with aromatic fragrance, intermingled with that delicate resinous perfume that comes from the opening buds; innumerable rose-buds hung from the trellises, as if waiting for the word to open; from the steep wall of rock, where a

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passage for the railroad had been cut, a cuckoo called, and thousands of birds joined in with their song. The whole world was full of blossoming fragrance and music of birds, — all was redeemed, ransomed, blessed.

The people at the station thought that the young man who was thus walking to and fro, sometimes hurrying, sometimes standing still, sometimes looking up, and then casting his eyes to the ground, must be expecting a relative by the next train; but Pranken was waiting for no person and no thing. What could there be in the world to come to him? He had everything. He could not conceive how he could stay here, and Manna be over there; no moment ought to pass away without their being together, one, inseparable.

A finch now flew away from the tree beneath which he was standing; it flew over the river to the island. Ah! could I also fly over and look at her and greet her from the tree, and at evening fly to her window-sill, and look upon her until she went to sleep, and in the morning when she awoke!

All the feelings that ever moved the heart of youth now took possession of Pranken, and he was frightened at himself, when that demon of vanity and self-conceit, whose growth he had so fostered within him, whispered in his ear, Thou art a noble, enthusiastic youth! All great qualities are thine! He now hated this evil spirit, and he found means of driving him out.

He sat in a retired arbor and read in Thomas à Kempis. He read the admonition: "Learn to rule thyself, and then thou canst rule the things of the world." Pranken had, until now, regarded life as a light jest, not worth the trouble, indeed, of attempting to do any thing with it. He had that contemptuous tone with which one orders a poodle to jump over a stick, and he looked up amazed as to what this should mean.

Is it possible that there is such a way of thinking as this, even in those who belong to the church? "In my father's house are many mansions, and perhaps, it is very well to show for once to the children of the world, that they are not the sole possessors of the right to sport freely with the world."

All was to Pranken more and more amazing, more and more enigmatical, and, at the same time, more and more illuminated. If the buds there upon the hedge could tell, in the moment when they open, how the light thrills through them, it would be like what was now taking place in the soul of this young man. And if a man, who had heard the old legend without believing it, should find down there in the river the Niebelungen treasure, the old, beautiful, splendid, rare and solid jewelry — he would feel as Pranken did when he really discovered, for the first time, the Christian doctrine in this searching and impressive little book. All is here so comprehensive, expressing thine own inner conflicting desires, and expressing them with such tenderness, and disclosing their secret springs, and giving too, the directions how thou canst lay aside what is wrong, and make the true thine own.

Pranken sat there a long time in a reverie; railway trains came, railway trains went; boats went up and down the river, but Pranken heard and saw all as if it were only a dream. The noon-day bell at the convent first aroused him. He went to the inn.

He met here a comrade, who was making a wedding tour with his young bride. Pranken was warmly welcomed; they were very glad to meet him. Pranken must join a water-party on an excursion to the mountains, after dinner; but he declined, he knew not why. But he looked at the young bride and bridegroom with gleaming eyes; so will it be, — so will it be, when he journeys with Manna! It thrilled him with ecstasy to think that he should be alone with her, alone out in the wide world! Why can he not, even now, go for her and bring her out? He promised to himself to learn patience.

They were very merry at dinner-time, and Pranken was delighted that he could still crack his old jokes; his comrade should not have a fine story to tell at the military-club, its members should not have a chance to jeer; and the stout Kannenberg should not bet a flask of Canary that this pious mood was only one of Pranken's whims. Pranken brought out his witticisms as if he had learned them by rote, and it seemed to him a century ago, almost as if it had been in a previous state of existence, that there had been such a thing as appearing on parade.

At table, Pranken heard accidentally that, on the next day, a pilgrimage was to leave the town near by with great pomp. The new-married couple took counsel whether they should not be spectators of the display at the place of pilgrimage; they would decide in the evening.

After Pranken had accompanied them to the boat, he went to the station, and took a ticket for town; he was glad to be able to be in time for the evening service at the cathedral. He reached the town and

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smiled compassionately, when obliging servants in the streets offered themselves as guides to places of amusements; he smiled compassionately, when a servant in the church asked the "gracious gentleman," whether he should show him everything. Pranken knelt among the worshippers.

Refreshed, and satisfied with himself, he left the church. He strolled through the town, and stood long before a hair-dresser's shop. No one would have thought, and Otto von Pranken least of all, that there was a battle-field destined for him, not outside in the wild contest of arms, but before a great window filled with various perfumes, false hair for men and women, with dolls' heads, whose glass eyes stared under the artificial brows and lashes. Over the door was printed in golden letters, "Hair-dressing and shaving done here." Is it not laughable that a battle is to be fought here? so far from being laughable, it is serious, bitter, earnest.

Pranken had made a heroic resolve to take part in the pilgrimage, and indeed he wanted to unite himself with the pilgrims in a humble manner, and join in their prayers and mortifications. And in the meanwhile, not to attract attention, and all alone, to allow the change to proceed silently in himself, it seemed expedient, first to get rid of his very noticeable whiskers and moustaches; and it was very important to make recognition difficult, for he feared that some one might meet him and change his determination, and other people be guilty of the sin of mockery. And he was especially troubled in regard to the young married couple, who wished to make the pilgrimage. He would be one of the sights of their journey which they could talk of on their return home. And, besides, how many might be seduced into impiety by laughing over it, and they certainly would laugh at Otto von Pranken's being among the pilgrims! Therefore, for your own sake, and that of others, you must be disguised somewhat.

So with heroic resolution — and it was certainly heroic, for who would be willing to deprive himself of an ornament so highly prized and not to be replaced at pleasure? — Pranken entered the fragrant shop, sat down in an arm-chair, and looked at his beard and moustache reflected in a great mirror hanging opposite. His eyes almost overflowed. A great white apron, a true sacrificial mantle for the sacrificial lamb, was thrown over him, and an exceedingly polite young man, who had no suspicion of the priestly office assigned to him, asked, —

"Does the gracious gentleman wish to be shaved, or to be curled?"

"Curled," answered Pranken, quick as lightning, for it came to him like an inspiration, that he would mingle with the pilgrims curled and elegantly dressed; this would be a fuller and deeper confession, and it would bring more honor to the sanctuaries, if it were seen that a man of rank, evidently a military officer, offered to them his veneration.

Finally, with hair nicely dressed, Pranken went out of the shop, and in all the large windows of all the stores he passed, he looked not without satisfaction at his rescued treasure, — his beard and moustache.

He smiled victoriously upon the world.

Pranken knew of an inn, in the town, which was the resort of the élite of the nobility, and he went there hoping to find some companion of equal rank, and with the firm determination to induce him to go on the pilgrimage with him. He found no one whom he knew, and he could not remain in the public parlor, for he saw there, on entering, a famous actress, who was fulfilling here a star engagement, and whom he had formerly known; he pretended not to recognize her and withdrew to his own room.

The morning came; the bells rang for the pilgrims to take their departure. Pranken formed a weighty resolve. Nothing hasty! he said to himself. Make no show! Give the world no opportunity for misconstruction! One has a duty to perform to the world and to the past! One must be putting off the old man, by degrees, and let the new man be unfolded.

From the window of the inn Pranken saw the pilgrims go forth, as he puffed clouds of smoke from his cigar. Then he went to the station, bought a ticket, and returned to Wolfsgarten.

CHAPTER IV.

BITTER ALMONDS.

In the country where the tankard rules, the ladies assemble to take coffee, and wine and coffee are equal in this respect, that they can be had at all seasons of the year. In spring and summer, it is pleasant to drink them on a gentle eminence, in a shady arbor where there is a fine view of the country around; in autumn and winter, in comfortable rooms furnished with an abundance of sofa-cushions, embroidered in patterns of parrots or fat woolly dogs.

The coffee-party has the advantage of being given in succession by various per-

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sons, and as the pint of wine is not strictly a pint, but can be increased at pleasure, so coffee is only a modest expression for the May-bowls and fruits of the culinary art which follow it; and a hostess who wishes to do something surpassing the rest sends to the great city for ice, to be brought over the railroad.

The Justice's wife led off in the spring coffee-parties. The little garden behind the house was very pleasant, where the lilacs were blooming in all their glory, but the surrounding houses overlooked it, and it was better to have the party in the best parlor opening upon the balcony.

The rustling chintz covers were taken off the sofa-cushions. The invitations were sent out, among the rest to the Countess Wolfsgarten, who had returned an acceptance; but the regular course of proceeding was, that about an hour before the appointed time, a delicately scented, prettily written note should arrive, in which Frau Bella expressed her regret that an unfortunate head-ache would deprive her of the long anticipated pleasure of meeting the highly respected wife of the Justice, and her much esteemed company.

To-day, contrary to all expectation, the Countess had come herself, and had indeed arrived before any of the rest of the party, which was not exactly the thing in fashionable society.

The Justice's wife sent Lina directly into the state parlor to place one more chair, for they had felt quite sure that the Countess would not come.

"I expect my brother to day, he has been down the Rhine," Frau Bella soon said.

She did in fact wish to carry her brother home from the town, that she might hear more of Manna and the enigmatical telegram; but she had a second purpose in view, and an opportunity of carrying it out soon presented itself.

The Justice's wife complained that Captain and Doctor Dournay —"what is one to call him — ?"

"Call him simply doctor."

That Doctor Dournay, then, had paid a visit to the priest, to the major, and to the physician. The Major's housekeeper had told the beadle a great deal about him. But very singularly, though he seemed to be a man of excellent manners, he had neglected the very central point of the town, which was certainly the Justice's court. He had certainly apologized very humbly when he spent the night at the doctor's, and the doctor's wife said that he was soon to return and enter Sonnenkamp's service with a salary more than double that of a Justice. Herr von Pranken had done a very kind thing in getting this position for the young man, who, it was to be hoped, would show himself worthy of his recommendation.

Bella nodded acquiescingly, and praised the Justice's wife for acknowledging in so friendly a manner the kindness which it was a duty to show to an unfortunate man, but added that she must certainly see the danger also, that an untrustworthy man could be injured in no way more than by benefits, which served only to nourish enemies, who lay in wait for the right moment to show themselves in their true light.

The Justice's wife was delighted with the manner in which this lady of acknowledged intellect dressed up her own plain commonsense so finely. She assented, and felt much pleased with the idea, that, as soon as one enjoyed personal intercourse with the Countess Wolfsgarten, one could think more clearly and understand everything better. Both ladies smiled contentedly, and each declared that the other was dressed most becomingly and tastefully, though of course with the acknowledgment that Frau Bella was the most marked in this respect, for to attempt to rival her would be folly.

Bella certainly looked very animated. She spoke lightly — for the matter must not be misrepresented — of the slight attack of illness which the Count had had at Villa Eden, when "Herr Dournay" who had lifted him had behaved right bravely. The Justice's wife launched out in praise of the Count, and of the care which was taken of his life.

Frau Bella led the conversation back, and with cautious circumspection insinuated that Eric had omitted a visit to the Justice, because he felt a certain shyness of legal tribunals, and still more of all faithful servants of the reigning king.

With considerable eagerness, the Justice's wife pressed for further information, and under a promise of strict secrecy — though, of course, the Justice must know all — she was informed that people knew of certain political declarations, even of printed announcements in a foreign paper, or rather a paper published beyond the boundary line, which had induced the former Lieutenant Dournay to ask for his discharge, before it was given him without his asking.

"Then why was the rank of captain given him?" asked the Justice's wife.

"You question with as much shrewdness as the Justice himself," replied Bella.

She did not seem prepared for this inquiry, and only said that it was not for her to wish to stand in the way of a poor young

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man's earning a living. Very likely it had been done — at this point she seized the hand of the Justice's wife and held it between her own, as if signifying that she was entrusting a great secret to her charge — very likely it had been done for the sake of his mother, who had been a favorite lady of honor to the dowager princess; of course the matter was kept as quiet as possible.

Bella tried to put on a pleased smile, and to repress an expression of mild compassion, when the Justice's wife said,—

"There my husband guessed right again. As we were driving home from your reception — ah, what a pleasant, cheerful time we had — my husband said to me and my daughter, 'Children, I tell you, this Herr Dournay is a dangerous man.' Oh, men are always more keen-sighted, and know more about each other than we women can ever find out."

She seemed to be losing herself in general reflections on mankind, which she liked to make, saying that any one who lived over a ground-floor full of legal documents took a very gloomy view of men.

This did not seem to be what Bella wanted to-day. She asked very carelessly,—

"Has your husband spoken to Herr Sonnenkamp of his very sagacious opinion that this Herr Doctor Dournay is a dangerous man?"

"It's true that would be proper," said the Justice's wife. "Will you not tell my husband, gracious lady, that he ought to make his views known? He doesn't heed me, I'm sorry to say, but he is glad to do anything for you."

"Don't ask me," Bella replied. "You must see that I cannot mix myself up in this affair. My brother has a sort of regard toward his former comrade although they were not in the same regiment, and my husband has taken a morbid, I mean enthusiastic fancy to the young man. You are quite right; your husband is bound — "

Bella did her work so securely, that she felt sure that the Justice would go to Sonnenkamp before evening, and Herr Dournay might make the most of his confident bearing somewhere else, for Bella wished, on many accounts, that Eric should not be established in the neighborhood; he caused her uneasinsss, almost pain indeed. As she tapped one hand with the closed fan which she held tightly grasped in the other, she inwardly repeated the words of the Justice: This Dournay is a dangerous man.

The Justice's wife was a woman of democratic principles; she was the daughter of a Chief-Justice who had offered unbending resistance at the time when Metternich ruled Germany, and, besides, she had a comfortable property of her own, which helps one to keep to liberal ideas. She felt a sort of democratic pride in not yielding anything to the nobility; but she saw in Frau Bella an amiable, highly intellectual lady, and she submitted to her, without acknowledging to herself that her submission amounted to subserviency toward a countess. Bella was acute enough to see and understand it all, and treated the Justice's wife with that confidence which is shown only to equals; but she took care to be more than usually amiable, that the Justice's wife might attribute her visit to some other than the real object.

Lina entered the room, looking like a charming little housekeeper in her blue dress, and high-necked, white apron. Her mother sent her away again very soon, as the child must not be present if the gracious lady had still any private matter to speak of.

"Your dear child has developed finely, and she speaks very good French."

"Thank you," said the mother." "I don't know much of the young people of the present day; but Lina is still so slow, there's nothing piquant about her, and she is frightfully simple. Just think, the child has formed a fancy — how she ever got hold of such ideas in the convent, is a mystery to me — but only imagine, she believes that this Herr Captain Dournay has forced himself in as Roland's tutor, only because he is secretly in love with Fräulein Manna, whom he saw at the convent."

Frau Bella pretended much surprise, and heard the story of the meeting with Eric again, but the Justice's wife soon led the conversation back to the failure of all her efforts to make Lina a wide-awake girl.

Frau Bella might have said to her, if she had been disposed, You want to change this child, who has no special talent or beauty, from her genuineness and openness; you are continually teasing her to be lively, arch, and merry, to sing and to jump! You want to turn your fair-complexioned daughter with clear, light-blue eyes, into a dark-haired maiden with flashing brown eyes! Frau Bella might have said all this, but she did not. She pressed her thin lips close together; her nostrils quivered; she despised, at this moment, the whole of mankind. She was spared the necessity of saying anything, however, for the ladies who were invited came in successively. They were particularly glad to

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meet the Countess Wolfsgarten, and yet every one was a little vexed that she could not be the first in dress and appearance.

Ah, such a coffee-party of the fair sex!

There are some things, institutions, and arrangements, that have received a bad name, and cannot get rid of it again; this is the case with this fine institution of coffee-drinking. As soon as any favorable mention is made of it, every hearer and reader is convinced that is only downright irony, or a good-humored jest; for it has been settled, once for all, that this coffee-drinking of the ladies is only a hoax, and a pretence of kindly intercourse, with the participants. And yet this institution is a very excellent one, except when cards are introduced, and they carry it so far as to get up a regular gambling-party, as do the ladies at the small capitals, who have a handsome book with black morocco-binding, lettered on the back, "Hours of Meditation," but containing, inside, only blank leaves on which to mark down the points, and to enter the score. But that is only in the smaller capitals; here in our sociable little town, civilization has not advanced so far. Cards are not yet the book of salvation from all the evil of ennui; here they rely upon their own resources, the best way they can. And why should they not talk of persons, and occasionally say something pretty severe? What do other people, yes, even the men, in higher spheres, and at the tankard? Do they converse always about abstractions?

To be sure, there is talk here of town news, and whoever takes no part in this, holding himself aloof, does nothing for the town, nothing for his neighbor. And these ladies, who here have something to say about the so-called higher dignitaries, as well as the so-called inferior people, they are the same ladies who have established benevolent reunions, and behave in a strictly proper manner. So let us be pleasant and well-disposed guests, without any tendency to find fault, at this coffee-drinking of the fair sex.

Here comes Frau White. She is called Frau Coal behind her back, for she is the wife of a wood and coal-dealer. She has black locks and a dark complexion, which looks as if she had never washed herself thoroughly; and since the good woman is aware of her being nicknamed Mrs. Coal, she always dresses herself in dead-white colors, which are not very becoming to her dark hair and complexion by bright daylight, but by lamp-light she is very charming to look at. Unfortunately she has the defect of squinting, and with so sweet an expression, as if her eyes had been permanently arrested in the midst of a killingly affectionate glance.

Here is the wife of the cement-manufacturer, a tall and stately woman, never laughing, always inexpressibly serious, as if she carried about with her some great secret; she has no secret to impart, except that she has nothing to say.

Here sits the handsome wife of the school-director, a little too portly perhaps, nicknamed the Lay-figure because she is always dressed so finely; she has a perpetual smile upon her face, and one might almost imagine that she would still smile and show her beautiful teeth, even if she were to be the bearer or hearer of the tidings of death.

Here is the wife of the steamboat agent, a very fine looking woman, the mother of eleven children. The whole company are quite provoked with the little, plump, good woman, who never lets her cup stand on the table, but holds it up in her left hand, and repeatedly dips into it her biscuit, nodding assent to every one's remark, and seldom giving her own opinion, or, when she does, speaking with her mouth so full, that nobody understands her.

Here are the two Englishwomen who reside in the town; they were plain citizens, much beloved, without any title of lady, but were truly lady-like in appearance, for the reason that they needed no rank to set them off. They passed their time at home, did not depend upon visiting, and were like their own island, which produces all that man requires. Whenever the two ladies went into society they were always fresh, and were very cordially welcomed; and the amiable, awkward way in which they spoke German, and made use of strange constructions, served to increase the general kindliness. Bella was especially friendly toward the Englishwomen. The ladies' conversation was all intermingled together, like the singing of birds in the woods. Each one sings its own song, then polishes its own bill, and has no concern about the rest,—hardly hears them. Only two remarks were generally listened to and repeated; once, when Frau White made the happy observation that one would be aware of Count Clodwig's many badges of distinction, even if he did not wear any, which the Justice's wife took occasion to report to Bella; and again, when they came upon the subject, no one could tell how, whether the men's smoking was agreeable or disagreeable, Frau Lay-figure said that her good man often expressed the wish that he could be passionately fond of smoking, so as to

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wean himself from being so fond of her. Frau Bella had that perpetual complaisant smile which is so cold, and yet so fascinating.

The conversation only grazed Herr Sonnenkamp lightly. It remained fixed upon Eric, and why should it not? Here in the summer time, thousands frequent the little town, and swarm on the road leading to the old castle and to the other objects of interest for sight-seers, but when had there been a person who remained among them, and such a noteworthy personage too? Eric was a strange bird who wanted to take refuge in the mysterious house of Sonnenkamp; they will do him no harm, ruffle not one of his feathers, but each one wishes to have her say concerning where he comes from, and how he looks.

The Justice's wife remarked that she would have liked to invite the Major to the coffee-drinking, for he could tell the most about the captain-doctor.

The ladies were busy, of course, with their crochet, embroidery and sewing; but these are only make-believe labors, for one must not seem to be wholly idle.

When they understood that Eric's mother was a lady of unimpeachable nobility, each one wanted to make out that she had perceived that in him at once, it was something that could not be concealed. Bella accorded to this remark one of her most friendly looks of general approval.

When the Justice himself now came, for a little quarter of an hour, to join the company, Bella requested him to take a chair by her; she declared that they were very happy in this harmless circle, and she desired that no disturbing element should ever enter, to have only a decomposing influence upon it.

The Justice looked at her with his good-natured eyes, wholly at a loss to know what she meant, and stroked his obstinate whiskers; he could not imagine that this was intended to prepare the way for what his wife was to impart to him. He excused himself and soon went away; his wife informed them that Lina had joined the Liederkranz of the town; they were practising now for the great musical festival which was to be held in the neighboring city, and to Lina would undoubtedly be assigned a solo-piece.

Frau Bella spoke very advisingly, and at the same time very discouragingly. She expressed her dislike of musical festivals, being convinced in her own mind that she alone understands music, and that the music which she fancies is the only genuine music. In these days, hundreds of young people of both sexes, of ordinary standing in society, sing in the musical festivals an oratorio of Händel, Haydn, Bach, and this vexed Bella; these people are convinced that they know something. If she had had power, she would have had the police put a stop to these meetings. For this reason, Frau Bella had a special spite against the oratorio, but she only said,—"I have no appreciation of it;" and inasmuch as she said, "I have no appreciation of it," this ought to be ample evidence that there is nothing in it to be appreciated.

She was exceedingly gracious and condescending. She said that she did not question the merits of the German masters in oratorio. The truth is, that it was extremely repugnant to her to have the Justice's wife, the wife of the school-director, and the two daughters of the head-forester, and even perhaps the tailor's and cobbler's daughters, presuming to be interested in high art, when not one of them could sound a single true note.

Lina now acquired a new importance, for there was a general expression of desire to hear her sing. The English ladies asked very pressingly for a German song, but Lina, who usually was not backward, to-day was not willing to comply. Her mother's eyes flashed, but Frau Bella placed her hand upon the arm of the angry mother, and an unheard of event happened; saying that she did not blame Lina for not being willing to begin to sing abruptly, without any preparation, she arose, went to the grand piano, preluded, and then played a sonata of Mozart in masterly style. All were happy, and the Justice's house highly exalted, for none could boast, except the Castle Wolfsgarten and the castles of the nobility, that Bella had ever touched a key in any other than her own house.

Bella received overwhelming laudation, but she rejected it, and in a half serious, half contemptuous way, maintained that every one who wore long dresses wanted to play the piano. Bella was a genuine sister of her brother; she could be happy a whole day if she succeeded in uttering one pointed speech, and she took great delight now in saying, —

"Every girl, now-a-days, thinks she must learn to knit a musical stocking."

She continued to repeat these words, musical stocking, in a measure of three-fourths time. Every one laughed, the English ladies looked up in surprise, and Bella was glad to explain to them what she meant by these words, adding, —

"Yes, they knit a stocking out of notes, and the great thing with them is, not to drop a single stitch. I truly believe that

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the good children consider the four movements of the sonata to be the four parts of the stocking; the top is the first movement, the leg is the adagio, the heel is the scherzo, the toe is the finale. Only one who has a real talent for it ought to be allowed to learn music."

This was generally agreed to, and they spoke of the amount of time spent upon the piano in youth, and that after marriage it was given up.

The Justice's wife had been appealed to, and if there can be a higher heaven in heaven itself, it was opened when Frau Bella praised Lina's singing, which she had heard, and requested that Lina might make her a visit of some weeks, when she could, perhaps, give her some instruction. The glance which the Justice's wife cast to her husband was inexpressibly joyful; and how delightful it is to have the ladies ear-witnesses of all this! It seemed to her that she was very good-natured and very condescending, to be still friendly and affable with the doctor's wife, and also, indeed, with Frau Coal and the merchants' wives.

Bella extolled now, in the warmest terms, the delicious, spicy cakes which the Justice's wife knew how to make so excellently well; she would like to know the ingredients. The Justice's wife said that she had a particular way of giving them their flavor by putting into them a certain quantity of bitter almonds; and she promised to write out the receipt for her, but she resolved in her own mind never to remember to do it.

They had hardly tasted of the May-bowl, and declared that no one else knew how to mix it so well, before the Justice was informed that Herr von Pranken had arrived. The Justice went down, his wife detained Bella, and Lina, looking out of the window, saw that Pranken decidedly refused to come in for a moment. Bella now drove away, after taking a very hasty leave.

When she had gone, it seemed to all as if the court had withdrawn; they drew near to each other in a more confidential way, and had for the first time a really easy and home-like feeling.

The English ladies were the first to take their departure; the rest would not be less genteel than they, and in a short time the parents and the child were by themselves.

The wife took her husband into an adjoining room, and impressed upon him very earnestly, that it was the duty of a Justice to keep his district clean.

The Justice was faithful in his office, and whoever spoke of him would always affirm that he was the best man in the world. But he had no particular zeal for his calling; he was in the habit of saying, — Why am I mixed up with the affairs of other people? If I were a man of property, I would have nothing to do with the quarrels of other persons, but live quietly and contentedly to myself. But inasmuch as he had been inducted into the office, he performed its duties with fidelity. He was very reluctant to come to the determination to interfere in the matter of Eric, and he consented only when his wife told him in so many words, that the countess Bella had expressed the wish that he should.

They had come to the best understanding, when suddenly a slam, crash, and shriek were heard. Lina had let fall a whole tray full of cups.

The Justice's wife could not give a more satisfactory evidence of her serene content, than by saying, as she did, to Lina, —

"Be quiet, dear child. The mischief is done; it's of no sort of account. Cheer up, you've looked so blooming, and now you're so pale. I could almost thank God for sending us this trifling mishap, for in every joy there must be some little sorrow intermingled."

Lina was quiet, for she could not tell what she was thinking of when the coffee-tray fell out of her hands.

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CHAPTER V.

THE WORLD-SOUL.

"WHY did you not look in, for a moment, upon the worthy people?" asked Bella of her brother, after they had both taken their seats in the carriage.

Whenever she came from a company where she had been amiable, this mood continued awhile, and she would look smilingly into the air, then smilingly upon the furniture around; it was so now. There was in her the dying echo of a pleasant and cheerful frame of mind, but her brother came out of an entirely remote world, having spoken to-day with no one,—who would have thought it of him?—but his own soul, or more properly, Manna's soul.

"Ah! don't speak to me of the world," he said; "I wish to forget it, and that it should also forget me. I know it well, all hollow, waste, wilted, mere puppet-show. If you have been helping the puppets dance there awhile, you can lay them away again in the closet of forgetfulness."

"You seem rather low-spirited," said Bella, placing her hand upon her brother's shoulder.

"Low-spirited! that's another catchword! How often have I heard it used, and used it myself! What is meant by low-spirited? nothing. I have been knocked in pieces, and newly put together again. Ah, sister, a miracle has been wrought in me, and all miracles are now clear to me. Ah! I may come back to the words of the world, but I do not see how."

"Excellent! I congratulate you; you seem to have really fallen in love."

"Fallen in love! For God's sake, don't say that; I am consecrated, sanctified. I am yet such a poor, timorous, wretched child of the world, that I am ashamed to make my confession even to you, my only sister. Ah! I could never have believed that I should feel such emotion—I don't know what to call it—exaltation, such rapture thrilling every nerve. O sister, what a maiden!"

"It is not true," said Bella, leaning her head back against the soft lining of the carriage, "it not true that we women are the enigma of the world; you men are far more so. Over you, over Otto von Pranken, the ballet connoisseur, has come such a romantic feeling as this! But beautiful, excellent, the mightiest power, is the power of illusion."

Pranken was silent; he heard Bella's words as if they were uttered in a past state of existence. When, where, did they speak and think of the ballet? And yet, at these words there came dancing before his memory merry, aerial, short-dressed, roguish, smiling forms. His heart thumped like a hammer against the book, the book placed there in his breast-pocket. He was about to tell his sister that for several days he had no longer known who he was; that he was obliged often to recall to mind his own name, what he had wished, and what he still wished; that he went like one intoxicated through the world, which was only a flitting by of passing shadows; here were swiftly darting railway-trains, there towns and castles reflected in the river: all were fleeting shadows which would soon be gone, while only the soul had real being, the soul alone.

Such had been the influence of Thomas à Kempis, so had he read the words on which Manna's dark-brown eye had rested. All this passed through his mind; he could not make his sister comprehend the transformation, he could hardly comprehend it himself. He came to the conclusion to keep it all to himself; and changing his tone, with great self-command, he said smiling:—

"Yes, Bella, love has a sort of sanctifying power, if the word is allowable."

Bella told him in a bantering way, that he uttered this like a Protestant candidate for the ministry, who is making a declaration of love in the parsonage arbor to the minister's blonde little daughter, clad in rose-colored calico. She looked upon it, however, as an excellent, very commendable guaranty of his feelings, that he had declined, in his present state of mind, to enter the Justice's house; she praised his intention of breaking off now his flirtation with Lina.

Otto nodded, with a feeling of shame; and he began now to speak of Manna, in so gentle a tone, and in such serious earnestness, that Bella was more and more amazed. She let him go on without interruption, and, clasping together the fingers of her right and left hand, she said to herself in a low tone:—

"Nut-brown eyes seven times, gazelle three times, glorious beyond all count."

They drove through a little, fragrant pine-wood, and it seemed to Pranken as if this perfumed air from without, and that from the book in his bosom, enveloped him, enwrapped him in its sweet odors, and elevated him above everything. He said, looking fixedly before him:—

"Since our great-uncle, the Archbishop Hubert, no one of our family has entered the service of the church; I shall—"

"You?"

"I shall," continued Pranken, "dedicate my second son to the church."

It appeared exceedingly comical, and

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yet Pranken said it with the deepest seriousness, while leaning comfortably against the back of the carriage, and puffing thick clouds of smoke in quick succession from the cigar in his mouth.

Bella, who always had some direct reply or some apposite remark to make in continuation, now said nothing, and Otto, who found it very hard to change the tone of conversation, seemed to himself to be under a spell. He, the merry one, he, always so free and easy, was reduced to the level of some intrusive swaggerer in a convivial company, who had pretended to be a boon-companion, and must drink and drink, whether he relished it or not.

"I should like to give you one piece of advice," said Bella at last.

"I should like to hear it."

"Otto, I believe that your feeling is genuine, and I will also believe that it will last; but, for heaven's sake, don't let anything of it be perceived, for it will be considered hypocrisy, and the abject submission of a suitor, to win by this means this pious, wealthy heiress. Therefore, for the sake of your own honor, for the sake of your position, — I pass by every other consideration, — keep all these extravagances under safe lock and key. Otto, it is not my mouth that speaks, I am but the mouth-piece of the world: lock up all these heavenly sensations. Forgive me if I have not used the right word; I can think now of no other. In short, be the same as you were before you took this journey, at least in presence of the world. Are you offended with me? Your features are so painfully contracted."

"O, no, you are shrewd and kind, and I will do as you say."

As if a new stop had been drawn out, Pranken immediately asked: —

"What's the state of things at the Villa? Is the All-wise, the great World-soul, still there?"

"You mean, perhaps, your friend?" Bella could not refrain from bantering her brother.

"My friend? He never was my friend, and I never called him so. I have allowed myself to be bamboozled only through pity. It is a long-standing trait in our family, that we are not able to see any one in misfortune, and I, when I help an unfortunate one, come readily into a more intimate relation with him than is natural and proper. If one wishes to rescue a man from drowning, one must grasp him in his arms and to his heart, but this does not make him our bosom-friend."

Here was again the flippant, galloping style of speaking, but there was a depth of thought in the illustration derived from the meditations of the previous days.

Bella handed her brother a note which Fräulein Perini had given her for him. Pranken broke the seal and read it; his countenance became cheerful. He put the letter in his breast-pocket, but as it did not seem to suit the neighborhood of Thomas à Kempis, he took it out again, and put it in another pocket. Then he folded his arms over his breast, and looked peacefully and serenely before him.

"Might I be permitted to read Fräulein Perini's note?" said Bella, extending her hand.

Otto took it out, hastily ran through it again, and handed it to his sister. It contained the information that Eric had gone away, and that he had held a secret interview with Frau Ceres; the details must be given by word of mouth.

Otto said that he wanted, some time or other, an answer to this riddle.

"The riddle is solved for me," said Bella exultingly. "Lina, the Justice's daughter — it just occurs to me that Egmont's Clara had no surname, needed none — well, Lina, the Justice's daughter, has declared to all the world, that the Captain World-soul was with her at the convent where Manna is, and without saying a word about it, he gets himself introduced by you, the next day, to her father. You then, as well as the rest of us, have been taken in by this loftily sublime World-soul."

Pranken drew a long breath, doubled up his fist, and then made a repelling motion with his hand. Bella imparted the further information that she had seen to it, at the coffee-party, that the World-soul—this word seemed to her just the one to designate Eric — should be obliged to seek another abiding place; the Justice would give the finishing stroke to him. Bella perceived, to her amazement, that Otto did not agree with her in this method of proceeding. It was entirely unworthy of the higher life—he did not explain whether he meant the higher social or spiritual life — to intrigue in this way against a poor deceitful wretch; he would much rather go openly to work, and directly enlighten Sonnenkamp.

Bella was in very good spirits, and took it in good part. She began with saying, that it was in the highest degree contemptible to make such a stir about the appointment of a private tutor, a personage that must always play a subordinate part, however fine may be his appearance. She advised her brother, in the mean while, not to let the Justice be beforehand with him if he himself wanted to have credit in the matter.

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Otto declared his intent to visit Herr Sonnenkamp the next day, and then to cut off Dournay's secret threads. But he let the next day, and yet another, pass by, without going to the villa. If other tools and other hands did the work of annihilation, so much the better. The Justice should have time to carry out his design. Otto read Thomas à Kempis, to see if there was not some direction given for such a case; he found none.

CHAPTER VI.

SKILFUL STRATEGY.

On the third day after his return, Pranken set out for the villa. He stopped at the Justice's, for he wanted to know what he had done. But the Justice said, modestly as well as wisely, that he did not think it fitting to take any step before speaking with Herr von Pranken, who had recommended his friend to the house; he was ready, however, to drive with Herr von Pranken to Villa Eden.

Pranken bowed his thanks. He must then himself take a part in the affair. He did not decline the offer of the Justice, perhaps the pedantic little man might serve as a reconnoitering party, to find out where, and in what condition, the enemy was.

In his new frame of mind, Pranken was not inclined to enter into any intrigue, and he said to himself that this was nothing of that sort; but strategy was always permissible, even required. One must lay hold of the enemy wherever and howsoever he can. Pranken drew himself up erect, and laid down the precise method of proceeding: he would pretend to apologise for Eric, in order to help the Justice accomplish his object more directly. He was, again, the spirited, confident, captain of the horse-guards leaping the barriers.

The Justice requested that he would see the ladies, while he got ready for the drive. He had not yet shaved. The good Justice lived all the year round in violation of the law; every day his mustaches were liable to fell a sacrifice to the stringent regulation of the Prince, that the officers of the civil service should not wear a moustache. He gave as an excuse for wearing it his suffering from tooth-ache, but the real reason was, that he wanted to hide the loss of his teeth.

Pranken went up stairs. The Justice's wife welcomed him, and could not find words strong enough to describe her rapturous admiration of Bella, and the regret of the whole company that Herr von Pranken had not come in for a moment.

"Might one be allowed to ask where you have been?" enquired the wife of the Justice.

"I have been to see a dear friend on the lower Rhine."

"Might one ask the name of the friend?"

"Herr von Kempen."

She congratulated Pranken on having such intimate friends; if they could be always worthy of his friendship. The conversation might naturally, at this point, have brought in Eric, but Pranken refrained, and asked after Fräulein Lina. The mother said that her child was learning to cook, which every good housewife ought to be able to do; only it was to be regretted that there were no cooks fit to give any instruction. Pranken expressed himself in praise of this proceeding, and spoke of the demoralised condition of service, for which they had to thank the revolutionists, who undermined all fidelity and all belief.

The lady considered this very true, and was again on the point of referring to Eric, when luckily the Justice entered. He had put on his official dress, and his sword, making an almost ridiculous appearance, but Pranken was highly delighted at this respect for the occasion. They drove together to the villa. When Pranken left the Justice's house, he twirled his mustaches, in a most serene state of self-satisfaction and content. He is still honorable in the highest degree, shamefully good would many of his comrades call it, so to spare the girl. With this feeling of exemplary virtue — and it has a fine relish — he was extremely amiable, and full of elasticity, feeling convinced that he was, every instant, a benefactor of the family, and that at no small sacrifice on his own part.

Lina looked at them from the servant's room near the kitchen, as they drove off; she stood behind the flowers in full bloom upon the window-seat, and, as she inhaled the fragrance of a new-blown monthly rose, a fragrance not less sweet breathed through her soul. When she could no longer see the carriage in which her father sat with the baron, she hastened to the best room, opened the piano, and sang, with clear voice and ardent expression, love-songs to the world in general. Her mother came in, with her hair in disorder, and considered it wholly incomprehensible that Lina should be singing, while two pots out there in the kitchen were boiling over.

"You'll never be anything but an ignoramus; except a little bit of language you learned there, the convent has only made you simpler than ever."

Lina went into the kitchen again, and stood before the hearth, lost in reverie.

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She would like to have heard what her father and Pranken had to say to one another.

Their conversation was very constrained. Pranken praised the Justice for his zeal in keeping his district pure; the Justice complained that he had, in this case, no overt acts to proceed upon, only a supposed dangerous tendency. He understood how to draw Pranken out, and the latter narrated many charges, of course wholly unjust, an appearance of treason among others, which had been brought against Eric. He prayed him, however, to spare the poor, young man to whom the Prince himself had been merciful, and he thanked the Justice for neutralizing the effects of the impulse, by which he himself had been violently carried away. The Justice did not know exactly what course he ought to take, and he was terrified when they came in sight of the villa.

CHAPTER VII.

A SUBSTITUTE.

ROLAND had gone to sleep with anger in his heart, on the evening of the parting, and he awoke in sorrow. It seemed impossible that Eric could have left him, and so strong was his faith in the bond between them, that he wished to go to Eric's room to ask forgiveness for having dreamed such evil things of him. But it was all true. He went to the room; it was empty, with only the doctor's diploma lying upon the table, a sign that it had not been all a dream.

Roland was not to remain long alone; he was summoned to his father.

His father introduced him to a man of gentlemanly bearing, who spoke only in French and somewhat broken German. This agreeable-looking young man, the Chevalier de Canne by name, was from French Switzerland, and came warmly recommended by a banker in the capital, who did not himself know the fountain-head of the stream which had brought the man to him, for it was all Fräulein Perini's work.

Fräulein Perini was never seen to send her letters by post, for they went through the hands of the priest, but her relations with the French clergy were such, that, by safe mediation, a lay-pupil who could be depended on was called to the position in Sonnenkamp's household. Sonnenkamp's prejudices against such a connection were well known, and it was carefully concealed.

By his modest and dignified bearing the Chevalier knew how to win the favor of the whole household, not excepting Herr Sonnenkamp. In contrast with Eric, he had about him something impersonal, so to speak; never obtruding any peculiar expression of his own special views, skilfully agreeing with everything, and succeeding, without flattery, in giving back each person's own words in such a way that they seemed to the speaker remarkably significant and excellent. He was able so to illustrate and interpret even the few words which Frau Ceres uttered, that one would believe he had long known the lady; he was besides especially welcome to Herr Sonnenkamp, from having a thorough knowledge of botany. With Fräulein Perini, he said grace before dinner, with so modest and elegant an air that it only added to the attractiveness of his appearance. Everyone was charmed except Roland, who, without knowing why, was constantly comparing the Chevalier with Eric. For the first time, he begged his father to send him to some school, no matter what one, and promised to be perfectly tractable; his father would not yield to his desire, but declared instead that Roland was very fortunate to have such a tutor found for him.

Roland could not complain that the Chevalier made his studies a burden to him, but he could not put Eric out of his thoughts. He had already thrice written to him directly, letters like the lament of a maiden who tells her lover how she is urged to a loveless marriage, and implores him to come to her. He begged Eric, who knew nothing of his angry mood, to forgive him for having fallen away from his allegiance for a moment; he clung to the hope that his father, who always spoke well of Eric, would still summon him.

So wrote Roland; he did not send the letters, but carelessly left them lying open, and the Chevalier took copies, which Fräulein Perini received.

Eric had in Joseph a firm ally in the family. He asked Roland continually when Eric would return, told him much of his parents and his grandfather, and also of a brother who was just Roland's own age. This gave new intensity to the longing after Eric, for Roland thought he would bring his brother with him, and then he would also have a brother and comrade.

Several days had passed thus; Roland was sitting on a camp-stool, near the road, where there was a fine view of the park, from which the tower of the castle seemed to spring up as a natural growth. Roland was drawing, and the Chevalier, who was a master in the art, sat near him. Roland soon saw that he had heretofore received too much assistance; he was now really painstaking and earnest. The Chevalier

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drew whatever Roland was drawing, and, from time to time, they compared their work. His teacher had advised him to make drawings of all the views of the castle before it was rebuilt, and Roland had succeeded in doing so. Sometimes he believed that he had done it himself, then it all seemed like a humbug to him, for the teacher had really done most of the work.

Roland heard carriage-wheels, his heart beat, it was certainly Eric coming. He hurried to the road, and saw Pranken sitting by the Justice.

The Chevalier had followed Roland, who stood staring at the carriage. Pranken held out his hand and asked Roland to introduce the gentleman; Roland was obliged to mention his name, and the Chevalier added, in a tone of studied respect, the position he held. Pranken nodded in a very friendly manner, and left the carriage to walk with Roland, telling him that he brought him greetings from his sister, and that he wanted to speak with him alone, by and by, as he had an important message for him. Then he praised the noble bearing of the stranger, and said that such a man was far better than a conceited German doctor.

"Eric has a right to be conceited, but he is not," answered Roland.

Pranken twirled his moustache; he might be easy, and let Eric have due, since he was out of the way.

Roland felt an anxiety for which he could not account; he had a foreboding that something was going on which concerned Eric. At the villa Pranken left Roland to the Chevalier, to whom he nodded graciously; he asked the Justice to go without him to Herr Sonnenkamp, and, while the Justice stared in astonishment, vanished, without waiting for an answer, and went to find Fräulein Perini.

There was a most cordial greeting between the two, who held out both hands to each other. When Pranken asked about the Chevalier, Fräulein Perini pretended to know nothing of him; Pranken spoke strongly of the good impression he had received of the man, and affected not to suspect that she had brought any secret influence to bear in the matter.

Then came an account of the visit to Manna. Not fully, but in some measure, Pranken made known what a change had taken place in himself.

Fräulein Perini listened attentively, holding her pearl cross in her left hand; then she gave the particulars of Eric's secret visit to Frau Ceres, which she had referred to in her note: she showed Pranken a letter, which she had received from the superior in answer to her inquiries about the meeting between Eric and Manna. A copy of a letter from Roland to Manna, in which Eric was mentioned, was also at hand.

But now all the chivalry in Pranken's nature showed itself, increased by a moral and religious impulse. He stretched out his hand, as if he would shelter Manna from every breath, and said firmly and decidedly, that not a syllable more should seem to put her in a doubtful position. The whole thing was nothing but a school-girl fancy of the Justice's silly daughter, Lina. Manna's radiant being should not be dimmed by the least cloud of suspicion, for she was pure, and great, and noble. Pranken felt himself her knight, the defender of innocence, and he was noble enough to extend his defence to Eric, who was blameless in this respect: honorable feeling and elevated sentiment required that he should do him justice. Fräulein Perini watched Pranken's noble ardor with surprise, as he continued:—

"From this moment let us forget Lina's childish fancy; neither you, nor I, nor my sister, nor Herr Sonnenkamp, who fortunately knows nothing of it, you say, will ever cherish a thought of it again."

Fräulein Perini, instead of being hurt, was quite happy at this greatness of mind and acuteness in Pranken; she was modest enough to make a jest at the petty ideas of women. With great tact she declared that this was now the true knight's service, for the ground on which the tournament was held in our days was higher than of old.

Fräulein Perini would, on no consideration, come into collison with Pranken, knowing what power she would thereby put out of her hands. Pranken left her, with calm self-satisfaction, to go to Herr Sonnenkamp: he was almost ready to defend Eric since he was already set aside. With great peace of mind he laid his hand on the book in his breast pocket; the man who spoke in it would be content with him.

CHAPTER VIII.

BALAAM.

PRANKEN found the Justice and Sonnenkamp engaged in general conversation; the greeting between him and the master of the house was very cordial, and he seated himself astride on a chair.

"I will tell you, honored friend," began Pranken, — he liked to call Sonnenkamp "honored friend" before people, — "I will tell you, by and by, about my journey. Now, let me congratulate you on having apparently found the right man for our Roland."

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Herr Sonnenkamp answered that he should hardly keep the Chevalier; he was only in the house on trial. Something seemed to tell him that the highly cultivated Swiss would lead Roland's disposition too much towards the clergy and the church. Eric was exactly the man whom he should like the best.

Pranken looked around, as if to make sure whether the enemy was taking up a new position, and said, —

"We must undoubtedly estimate the true market-value of this man."

Sonnenkamp looked at him sharply, as Pranken rattled out the words "market-value." Did the baron think he must adapt his language to him, the merchant? He could not guess that Pranken prided himself on the expression which he had carefully arranged beforehand; he answered,—

"The market-value of the man is not small, but this Captain Doctor is an eccentric man, and eccentric men are very agreeable, but one can not rely upon them."

With the warmth of a new convert Pranken dwelt on Eric's scepticism, and the necessity of Roland's being trusted to the guidance of a truly religious man, who might, at the same time, know the world and its ways.

Sonnenkamp asked, smiling, —

"Then would you really advise making an ecclesiastic of Roland?"

"If it were his mission ——"

Pranken played with his moustache, as he noticed Sonnenkamp's watchful look, bit his lips, and quickly corrected himself.

"If it were his true vocation, who would take the responsibility of holding him back? Perhaps it would be the noblest thing for him to renounce the treasures of this world, in order to win eternal treasure."

The Justice played, in an embarrassed manner, with his sword-belt; these words of unction from the Captain of the Guards seemed to him incomprehensible, and yet they could not be spoken in jest. He avoided meeting the eye of either of his companions. Sonnenkamp looked serious. It only appeared inconceivable to him that the young man could speak so incautiously, if, not satisfied with the prospect of Manna's rich dowry, he wished to appropriate Roland's portion.

In the consciousness of superiority, and in the triumph of playing with men, Sonnenkamp stated that Doctor Richard had spoken to him of Eric so enthusiastically, that it would seem that one could not bring the man back fast enough in a coach and six.

"Ah, the doctor!" exclaimed Pranken, swinging his right hand as if it held an invisible riding-whip. "The doctor! Of course! Atheists and Communists stand by each other. Has the doctor also told you that he had a private conversation with Herr Dournay on Sunday?"

"No; how do you know it?"

"By an accident. I heard — through — through a servant: there was a pretence of going to give medical advice, then a rubbing of hands, and the remark that there was no need of Herr Sonnenkamp's knowing that they were united by old ties."

Sonnenkamp thanked him warmly for this information, but inwardly it grated upon him. A suspicion that one of his servant's was in Pranken's pay, was confirmed. The Pole, to whom Pranken always spoke so pleasantly, must be the man, and he should leave the house.

Sonnenkamp whistled inaudibly, only from the position of his lips could it be seen that he was whistling.

The Justice considered it his duty to permit no attack on the doctor, inasmuch as he was the official district-physician; their positions called for mutual support. After he had defended the doctor from any harsh judgment, while Pranken continually stroked his beard and mustache, he gave the conversation a turn by saying:—

"Herr von Pranken had the best intentions in recommending him, but might I express my opinion of the young man?"

Sonnenkamp replied that he should attach much weight to the opinion of the Justice. This was the moment when the strategic movement ought to be made. Pranken set himself more firmly on his chair, and cheered the Justice on to the charge, crying, —

"Explain yourself clearly. I ought to reproach myself for not having considered that any connection with this young man would be looked upon as a disrespect to the supreme authorities, even as an act of hostility."

"Allow me," answered the Justice, with a tone and manner as if he were in the court-room, remanding the accused into custody, "allow me to keep within the limits which it behooves me to observe."

Pranken was beside himself with this Justice; this little, insignificant, almost impotent mannikin maintained a deportment which was quite incomprehensible. Pranken had expected that he would work Sonnenkamp into a state of great excitement, and would give him an indelible impression of the hatred of the court towards Eric, and what really came? An exceedingly mild, most prudently-weighed, amicable consideration.

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The Justice had called Eric a dangerous person considered only as a man, as a member of society. He said he did not know how rightly to express himself; he had meant it only in a moral sense; but he immediately took back the word *moral*, for Eric was known to be a highly moral man. And when he now came to the question whether, through any association with Eric, one would draw upon himself the displeasure of the court, a mild and benignant loyalty beamed from the countenance of the little man.

"The princes of our line," said he, "are not vindictive, but, on the contrary, extremely generous and forgiving; and our present reigning master! Good heavens! he has his peculiarities, but they are quite innocent, and with them he has inexhaustible kindness of heart, and do you think he would persecute the son of his teacher and the comrade of his brother's youth? I would sooner assert that he would show favor to any one who should assist Herr Eric — this Herr Eric, who has made it impossible for him to aid him in person."

Pranken was in despair. He looked at the Justice as if he were a hunting-dog that would not obey. He kept opening and shutting his hand, which seemed to feel a desperate longing for a whip; he made signs to the Justice, but in vain, and at last he smiled bitterly to himself. He looked at the Justice's mouth, thinking that his teeth must have grown again, he spoke fluently and decidedly as he never had done before. Ah, these bureaucrats! thought Pranken, pulling up his top-boots. Yes, these bureaucrats are not to be depended on!

"I am very glad," he cried at last, with a forced smile, "I am delighted that our respected Justice dispels all apprehension. Certainly, these official gentlemen understand their business excellently."

The Justice received his stab, but it did not penetrate the uniform. Sonnenkamp seemed to have played with the two men long enough. With an air of triumph, he went to his writing-table, where several sealed letters lay, tore the cover from one which he selected, and gave them the enclosed sheet, saying,—

"Read that, Herr von Pranken, and you too, Herr Justice, read it aloud."

And the Justice read,—

Villa Eden, May —, 186-.

Respected Herr Captain Doctor Dournay, — You will not take it ill of an old and experienced man, honored sir, if he takes the liberty of questioning from his one-sided, practical point of view, whether you are not committing an injustice in employing your mind, so richly endowed by nature, and furnished with knowledge, upon a single boy, instead of a large community. Allow me to say to you that I regard mind and knowledge as capital, and you make of your capital an investment at far too low a rate of interest. I honor the nobleness of mind and the modesty so manifest in your offer, but feeling assured that you entirely mistake yourself, when you think that you can be satisfied in so limited a sphere. I must, no less decidedly than gratefully, decline your offer to undertake the education of my son.

I desire that you would give me the opportunity, by offering you a situation for a year, with no special employment attached to it, to show to you how truly I am, most respectfully,

Your obedient servant,
Henry Sonnenkamp.

While the Justice was reading, Sonnenkamp whistled to himself, keeping time with one foot thrown over the other, manifestly very well satisfied with the letter.

He received it back with a triumphant glance, put it in a fresh envelope, and addressed it to Eric. While he was writing the address, he said, —

"I should like very much to take the man into my house on a different footing; he should do nothing but sit at the table and converse. Why should not that be had for money? If I were a Prince, I would appoint conversation-councillors. Are not the chamberlains something of this sort?" he asked Herr von Pranken, with a slight touch of sarcasm.

Pranken was disturbed. There was often in this man a height of presumption, which did not spare even the sacred precincts of the court; but Pranken smiled very obsequiously. Lootz was summoned through the speaking-tube, the letter was put into the post-bag, and Lootz departed.

Roland was waiting for Pranken, who now went with him into a retired place of the park, and there gave him an account of his journey, and delivered to him a second copy of Thomas à Kempis. He pointed out to Roland the place where he was to begin reading that day, and what he was to read every day; but always secretly, whether his tutor should be a believer or an unbeliever.

"Isn't Eric coming back any more?" asked Roland.

"Your father had written to him a de-

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cided refusal before I came, and the letter has been put into the post before this."

The boy sat upon the bench in the park, and stared fixedly, the book open in his hand.

CHAPTER IX.

DEJECTION AND COURAGE IN A CHILD'S HEART.

At the table, Frau Ceres thought that her son looked very pale; she besought the Chevalier not to tax him so severely, and especially not to let him draw so long out of doors.

The Chevalier entirely coincided with this; it was his plan to have Roland draw from plaster-models, and after that, he would take him out into the free air.

"Taken out into free air?" said Roland to himself; and it seemed to strike him that there was a contradiction in the idea of being taken into the free air.

Sonnenkamp was unusually cheerful at dinner; his contempt for men had to-day received new confirmation, and he had fresh conviction of his ability to play with them. He enjoyed a special sense of freedom in the thought that this Herr Dournay, who undertook to dictate matters for him and for so many other people, was now done with. Yet he must acknowledge to himself, that he could, probably, have made no better choice for his son.

After dinner, Pranken allowed the Justice, who was in a hurry, to be driven to town in Sonnenkamp's carriage; he himself remained in very confidential conversation with Sonnenkamp, who admired the art with which a young man, who was a suitor for a wealthy maiden, worked himself into a state of enthusiasm thereat.

After Pranken had departed, Sonnenkamp went to the conservatory, where Roland soon came to him and said:—

"Father, I have a request."

"I shall be glad, if it is a request that I can grant."

"Father, I promise to learn every day the names of twenty plants, if you will give me Herr Eric again."

"Very nice of Herr Dournay to teach you to promise me that."

The boy looked at his father, as if confounded, his lips swelled, and gazing timidly around upon the plants, as if he called upon them to bear testimony that he was speaking the truth, he cried:—

"Eric has not said to me anything of the kind, any more than those plants have; he has not taught me to say that; but if he had, I would learn it from him, and from nobody but him."

"Not even from me?" exclaimed Sonnenkamp.

The boy was silent, and his father repeated the question:—

"Not even from me?"

His tone was vehement, and he doubled up his great fist.

"Not even from me?" he asked the third time.

The boy drew back, and cried with a thrilling voice:—

"Father!"

Sonnenkamp's fist unclosed, and with forced composure he said:—

"I didn't mean to punish you, Roland — come here — nearer — nearer yet."

The boy went to him, and his father placed his hand upon his forehead, which was hot, while the father's hand was cold.

"I love you more than you can understand," said the father. He bent down his head, but the boy stretched out both hands, crying with a voice full of anguish:—

"Ah, father! I beseech you — father, I beseech you, not to kiss me now."

Sonnenkamp turned and went away. He expected that the boy would follow him, and clasp him round the neck, but he did not come.

Sonnenkamp stood in the hot-house near the palms; he felt chilly; then he asked himself: Why does not the child love you? Is that crack-brained German revolutionist, that Doctor Fritz, in the right, who used the words in a published letter: Thou who extirpatest filial and parental love in thy fellow human beings, how canst thou hope for the love of thine own children?"

He could not comprehend how these words, which were uttered in a contest long gone by, and which he wished to forget, now came into his mind. Suddenly a loud cry made the strong man shudder.

"God bless you, massa! God bless you, massa!" seemed to be uttered by the voice of a spirit.

He searched about, and found his wife's parrot, which had been brought in its cage to the hot-house. The gardener, when summoned, informed him that Frau Ceres had ordered the parrot to be brought here, as the dwelling-house was too cold for it.

"God bless you, massa! God bless you, massa!" cried the parrot behind Sonnenkamp, as he was leaving the palm-house.

Roland, in the meanwhile, stood as if rooted at the spot where his father had left him; the park, the house, everything swam round before his eyes. Joseph then came. Roland was rejoiced that there was yet one

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human being with whom he could lament over Eric's expulsion. He told him what had happened, and made complaint about his father.

"Don't say anything to me that I cannot repeat to your father," interposed Joseph. He was a prudent and faithful servant, who would have nothing to do with secrets, or with tale-bearing. His father had impressed that upon him, when he went away from his home, and he had resolutely and faithfully kept his counsel.

Roland asked Joseph if he was not going to return soon to his native city; Joseph replied in the negative, but went on to tell, with great animation, how splendid it was the first time he had leave to go home. He described very minutely the road, and whom he met at this place and at that, and how his mother was peeling potatoes when he stepped into the house, and how then his father came in, and all the neighbors, and expected to see him wearing golden clothes, because he was in the service of so rich a man. Joseph laughed at this simplicity, but Roland did not. He went back to the house, and it seemed to him as if the whole house thrust him out. He went into Manna's chamber; he thought it would seem homelike here, but the pictures on the wall, and the flowers in the chimney-place, looked at him so strange and so inquiring. He wished to write to Manna, and tell her of all his troubles, but he could not write.

He left the house and went into the court; here he stood for a while, looking round dreamily. The Chevalier came out and asked him if he did not want to do something; Roland stared at him, as if he did not recognize who he was, and made no reply. He took his cross-bow, but he did not draw the string. The sparrows and doves flew about hither and thither; the handsome dogs crowded up to him and sniffed around him, but Roland was like one bewildered.

He went to the river-bank, followed by his great dog, Devil, and there he sat down under the huge, tall willows, putting his hat on the ground near him, for his head seemed on fire. He bathed his brow with water, but his brow was no cooler. He did not know how long he had been sitting there, gazing fixedly into vacancy without any conscious thought, when he heard some one call him by name. He involuntarily clapped his hand upon the muzzle of the dog lying near him, scarcely breathing himself, in order not to betray his place of concealment. The voice grew fainter, and ceased to be heard. He still sat quiet, and cautioned the dog in a low tone to be still also; the dog seemed to understand him.

Roland took out of his side-pocket the letter he had written to Eric, and read it; his eyes overflowed with tears of longing and grief, and getting up, he hurled the letter into the river.

The night came on. Noiselessly, as a hunter who is stalking a deer, Roland left his lurking-place, and wended his way through the narrow path of the vineyard back from the river. He wanted to go to the huntsman, he wanted to go to the Major, he wanted to go to somebody who would help him. Suddenly he stopped.

"No! to nobody — to nobody!" he breathed low to himself, as if he hardly dared trust the silent night.

"To him! to him!"

He crouched down, so that nobody should see him in the vineyard, although it was dark. He did not stand erect, until he came to the highway above.

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CHAPTER X.

HELPING ONE'S SELF, OR BEING HELPED.

ERIC turned homewards, like a man, who, coming out of a saloon illuminated with dazzling brilliancy, to his study where burns a solitary lamp, involuntarily rubs his eyes, which having become accustomed to the greater degree of brightness, require it, and are unable without it to see so clearly and distinctly as before.

The peril of wealth lies in the fact that it may ruin not only the possessor, but the non-possessor. Language has not completely covered the whole case, when it calls this dissatisfaction and unrest of soul, envy, grudging, churlishness; it is not this at all, it is rather the severe torment of the unanswered question, Why art thou not as rich? No, this thou dost not desire; but why art thou not, at least, placed out of the reach of anxious care? The struggles of human life are hard enough, why must thou have, in addition, this wrestling with sordid want?

The most cruel suffering which the perception of riches inflicts upon the non-possessor is, that it produces in him an unwillingness to work, a supineness, a consciousness of servitude, and yet worse, that it makes all effort appear questionable. What avails all thy contriving, thy aspiration, all thy superstructure of great thoughts, so long as there are human beings near thee, inhabiting with thee the same earth, and perishing with starvation!

The ant in the pathway is better taken care of, for there are no ants who are glutted, while others near by are hungry. What is all labor, so long as this monster still stalks in the midst of us! Has that world-wisdom, has that religious doctrine, the victorious power of truth, if it cannot annihilate this monster?

Eric shut his eyes, and dreamed in broad daylight that disturbed dream of our age, which attends the clatter of the locomotive. The locomotive rushed along with rapid piston-beat, making a strange accompaniment to the meditation of the silent passenger. He had his eyes closed, and yet he now perceived that they were passing through a tunnel. And as such a plunge into the darkness of earth suddenly interrupts all conversation, so does it break off the thread of silent thought.

When they emerged into the light again, the current of Eric's thoughts became changed. A smile came over his countenance, which looked as if he were asleep, as the thought occurred to him that a rich vein was opened for a treatise upon the theoretical and practical treatment of poverty, philosophically, religiously, politically, and morally, in ancient times. The bitterness of the feeling of poverty was thereby lessened and removed, for poverty itself came into the realm of science. And his meditation proceeded farther; for to the historical view of poverty there was added a consideration of its essential nature. Man alone can be poor and rich. The whole world of human society is a linked chain of inquiring glances, as if each would say to the other, "Thou hast what I have not."

In external nature, no creature looks to another differently constituted, no created thing troubles itself about another; each bird in the wood has its own range for procuring food for its young, and no other one of the same species builds its nest within that circuit, obliging it to struggle for insects and grubs to feed its brood. The animals of a like species, of like characteristics, of like means of defence and attack, alone live together in one herd, but they have no union. Man alone comes into a union with beings of a like species, those who, endowed by nature with the same faculties, are furnished by destiny with greater force than he himself possesses.

The clattering continued without interruption, the locomotive whistled, and the thought took hold of Eric's soul, that the grandest idea which humanity has ever revealed out of the mouth of an individual has been this: "No one is poor and no one rich, when we direct the thought to the Eternal. The Fatherhood of God bridges over the abyss."

The wheels upon the iron rails went on beating time, and gave a new rhythm to Eric's thought, who now opened his eyes, saying to himself, —

"So it is! The children of God are borne along in the first, second, and third class railway carriages by the same power, the power of steam, whether they sit upon soft or hard benches; it makes no difference."

People got in, people got out; Eric took no notice of them, and they did not disturb his meditation. He quietly smiled upon all, and saw them as in a dream, wholly forgetful of himself, as one looks upon the movement hither and thither in an ant-hill, where each may carry its pine-needle, its little seed-grain.

Eric first waked up when his ticket was called for, as they approached the university-town, and then he roused himself as if he had just come out of a deep, dream-disturbed sleep; he composed himself ready

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to greet his mother. He got out. No one was awaiting his arrival.

The hills around, which had formerly seemed to Eric so bright and beautiful, and where he had strolled alone or with his father, engaged in the contemplation of vast, world-important thoughts, these hills now appeared so low and so small, and the river so insignificant! His eye had taken in wider and more extensive views, and a larger standard of measurement had unconsciously been made his own.

He saw the old forms at the station, he saw the university-simpleton, which every smaller university has, who grinned at the doctor, and bade him welcome. He saw the students with their caps of various colors, who were amusing themselves with making passes in the air with their canes, and playing with their dogs. All this seemed to him like a forgotten dream. And how was this? Had it not formerly been his highest desire to live and to teach here?

He went through the town,—nowhere anything pleasing to the eye; all was narrow, angular, contracted. He came to the paternal mansion; the narrow, wooden steps seemed to him so steep; he entered the sitting-room. No one was there. Mother and aunt had gone out. He went into his father's library: the books, formerly arranged in such good order, and which, hitherto, no one had ventured to disturb, were lying, for the most part, upon the floor; a tall, lean man, looking over the spectacles on the tip of his nose, stood staring at him with surprise.

Eric introduced himself; the man took the spectacles in his hand, and gave as his name that of a well-known antiquary in the capital, who had come to purchase the library.

So his mother's hope was gone, thought Eric. He remarked to the antiquary how valuable his father's annotations were, which were to be found on almost every page of every book.

The antiquary shrugging his shoulders, replied that these comments were valueless, and that they even detracted from the value of the books. If his father had written a great book, which gave him a great reputation, these notes would then have value; but his father had all his life been intending to write a great work, but had never accomplished it; and so all the notes and comments, even if valuable in themselves, were for the antiquary a depreciation in the worth of the books.

The tears came into Eric's eyes, already excited as he was by what he had gone through.

The whole labor of his father's life was not only to be lost, but to be worse than lost. Here was no leaf on which the eye of the sleeping one had not rested, here were his private thoughts, his feelings and his rich wisdom, and this was to be flung away into the world, despised, and perhaps appropriated by some stranger for his own profit.

Eric blamed himself for not accepting decidedly and immediately the position with Sonnenkamp; he might have effected it, and then have received a considerable sum of money. He blamed himself for letting the old cavalier pride get the better of him.

Eric looked sorrowfully upon a whole pile of manuscript sheets, books, and inserted printed scraps, which his father had been collecting and preparing his whole lifetime.

Eric's father had intended to write a book with the title, "The Real Man in History;" but he had died before accomplishing his purpose. Many valuable notes, even single portions, had been written out, but no use could be made of them, for each separate remark was considered in three different ways, and the leading idea had been contained in the head of the professor alone. All the sciences and the most remote facts of history had been drawn together, but the leading and connecting thought of the whole had vanished with the man himself, now resting in the ground; no entire form could be constructed out of these fragments. Only one thing was often pointed out, that the title should be, "The Real Man."

The first and larger part was to have collected those traits, scattered in the course of ages, out of which the image of God could be constructed as it was manifest in all the actual unfoldings of humanity; the second part was then to give an exact account of the manifestations of the soul's life in the past, to be as definitely determined as past events in external nature; and from there onwards was the point to be designated where genius, that miracle in the intellectual sphere, lays the foundation for new developments. This was what Eric thought, at any rate, when he tried to arrange the papers left by his father; then the leading and fundamental thought vanished, and all this matter collected with such laborious industry seemed utterly useless. As a treasure-digger, who must raise the treasure without speaking, so his father seemed to have closed his lips upon what he had already done, and upon what he intended to do.

Eric went back to the sitting-room, and

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the deep emotion of his heart, the whole uncertainty of his position, the growing strangeness of his home — all these were gathered into the thought of the lost labor, the useless toil of his father.

He looked around the room; it seemed to him inconveniently crowded with old furniture. He, who generally examined himself so closely and judged himself so severely, did not suspect that the sight of luxurious wealth and the late recognition of his own poverty had thrown a dark veil over all surrounding objects.

He collected himself, for he heard his mother and aunt returning.

His mother was heartily glad to see her son, but Eric was deeply troubled when she told him that she should have thought it quite right if he had accepted the situation with Sonnenkamp without reference to her, because, in their present position, it seemed double good fortune.

Eric saw that his mother, whom nothing had ever been able to bend, was now not only bent, but broken, and while he looked into her sorrowful face, he bitterly felt that his scruples and his sacrifice appeared superfluous.

His mother, repressing her own feelings, had written to the widowed princess, whose maid of honor she had been, giving an account of her situation. She had poured out her whole heart to the noble lady, and spoken of the great good fortune of the princess in being able to render essential help to her, who had never asked any favor; she requested a limited sum of money in order not to be obliged to sell the library of her husband, which was a sacred family possession, and had great value for her son. Tears came into her own eyes, as she read over the letter she had written. And now the mother handed to her son the reply of the dowager princess. She had answered through her secretary in well-expressed, sympathetic, and gracious terms. A small sum of money was enclosed, not half enough for the object in view.

The mother had had the desire to return this small sum, with the shrewd reply that, perhaps, the subordinate employed had not enclosed the full amount determined on by the princess; but she did not do it; one must not offend these high personages; one must even return humble thanks, in order not to forfeit their unsubstantial good-will.

Eric promised to have the library secured within a week.

He went immediately to his chamber, and wrote a letter to Count Wolfsgarten. He stated in plain words his state of mind at reaching his paternal home, in what condition he had found it and his mother, and finally he quoted to Clodwig his declaration, —

"I feel so much a friend to you, that I can allow myself to be placed under obligation by you."

Eric had written that he should feel no change towards Wolfsgarten, even if he refused his request. But feeling that this was not true, he tore up the letter and wrote another, leaving out this assurance. It was no trifling matter for Eric, the first time in his life, to present himself as a petitioner, yes, — he tormented himself with the word, — as a beggar.

Eric now spoke directly of his journey. His mother heard him through quietly, except that when Bella was mentioned, she said, — "Bella Pranken is a woman who cannot be counted on."

The old plans were discussed anew. Eric wanted to establish an educational institution, and his mother and aunt were strongly inclined to this, as they had many connections with the best families of the country; but they were not agreed whether they should have an institution for girls or for boys. Eric was in favor of the latter, as he could have more direct relations with that; but his mother wanted him to make a scientific journey for several years, so as to acquire a reputation at once by means of some great work, and not creep on in the plodding path. She and the aunt would, in the meanwhile, earn so much at the capital that Eric could live free from care.

They came to the conclusion to make no positive decision until Herr Sonnenkamp's letter should be received. The mother said that it would be the fulfilment of one of her ideals of life to take possession of the vine-covered little house; and she entertained a sanguine hope of attaining some influence over the lad surrounded by the dangers of riches; she should be glad to do so, as he was just the age of the son she had lost.

Eric visited his old teacher and friend, Professor Einsiedel, who was his chief instructor. He was a high-priest of science, a man who, engaged continually and exclusively in the region of pure thought, and in investigations for the extension of the sphere of knowledge, lived entirely alone, regular, methodical, systematic, free from all excitement, eating and drinking an incredibly small quantity, but always attracted by new developments of truth, always open-eyed to look into the wide-spreading realm of thought.

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Professor Einsiedel had been a friend of Eric's father, and he always lamented that he, who was continually striving after the best and the perfect, had not accomplished the good, which is necessarily incomplete. His axiom was, that we must be contented with having made some small, individual contribution, and that this extends to become a part of the great whole. We never accomplish anything that gives us perfect satisfaction, and to which we have nothing more to add. Only of the Creator can it be said, that on ending his work, He saw that it was good. The absolute mind can alone effect that the created existence shall correspond to the creative thought, the actual to the ideal; the finite mind must always have over it the idea of what it can do, and what it ought to do.

Whenever Eric came to the professor with any scientific inquiry, he received at once direction as to the best and most direct sources of information; he would even, with the greatest disinterestedness, place at the disposal of every one his own carefully prepared notes. It was the same to him whether it were published under his own name or under that of another person, provided it went forth to the world.

In the professor's study was a picture by Rembrandt, a small copper-plate engraving, which was almost a portrait of the professor himself. It represented Faust in his night-cap, gazing at the magic circle illuminated by its own light. Faust is an old, wizzled-up little man, sorely in need of the rejuvenating draught. Professor Einsiedel had no such magic potion, but he drank new life, every day, from the ancient classics.

When Eric now called upon him, to get help and advice, he found the good old professor — living entirely alone, and troubled not so much by being alone, as by the necessity of taking care of life — in rather an odd plight. He regretted that Eric did not devote himself exclusively to science, but admitted also that Eric's natural tendency was to some practical and personal activity. And with a smile, peculiarly his own, he said, —

"You are a well-formed man, and you ought to make money out of that, for it is worth something. Yes, yes, that will be a help."

Eric, in his restlessness and in his ardent desire not to be waiting, but to do something for himself, went the next day to the capital, for he had heard from the antiquarian, that an elderly man who conducted a very respectable institute was about to retire, and wanted to transfer it to good hands.

He came to the capital where he had lived as an officer many years, respected and without care. Several comrades in in their uniform seemed not to know him; others bethought themselves after he had passed, and called out, "Ah, is it you? Good-morning!" and went on. He went through the capital, where he was born, and where he felt at home, making inquiries like a stranger; he hoped it would again seem familiar and homelike to him, when he should go out into the streets from an established place of abode and a daily employment.

He was well received by the school-proprietor, and the conditions were acceptable. The respect in which his parents were held was of great advantage to him here; but the necessity of adopting the old regulations and methods made him hesitate. Without coming to any definite arrangement, he left the school-building.

He met now in one of the streets an old friend of his father, the present minister of education, who, stopping him, and inquiring about his mother and his own welfare, offered him the situation of custodian in the cabinet of antiquities, with the assurance that he should soon be promoted to the directorship. Eric promised to take the matter into consideration.

Just as he left the minister, an oldish man, who had been waiting for him under a house-porch, came up to him and greeted him in a very friendly manner. Eric could not call to mind who he was, and the man said that Eric had once done him a good turn in the house of correction, and thanked him for it; he was now in a very good situation as servant of the chancellor, and with a half-sly, half-pious expression of countenance, he offered to render Eric any service that was in his power.

Eric thanked him; he did not notice that many persons, who went by and recognised him, regarded this companionship as very odd.

Now the comrade who had taken Eric's place, and had become an actual captain, came from parade; he took Eric with him to the military club-house, and Eric was cheerful and lost all thought of the troubles of life. In the club-house there was much talk about Otto von Pranken and his marriage with a Creole worth many millions. Eric did not consider it necessary to say that Manna was no Creole, and that he had some knowledge of how the matter really stood.

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CHAPTER XI.

WHERE ART THOU, ROLAND?

"Where is Roland?"

Sonnenkamp asks Joseph, Joseph asks Bertram, Bertram asks Lootz, Lootz asks the head-gardener, the head-gardener asks the Little-squirrel, the Little-squirrel asks the laborers, the laborers ask the children, the children ask the air, Fräulein Perini asks the Chevalier, the Chevalier asks the dogs, and Frau Ceres must find out nothing from any of them.

Sonnenkamp rides at full speed to the Major, the Major asks Fräulein Milch, but she, who knows everything, this time knows nothing. The Major rides to the castle; Roland's name is called out in all the excavations and dungeons, but there is no answer.

Sonnenkamp sends the groom to the huntsman, but he is off to the field, and not to be found.

Sonnenkamp rides to the railroad station, taking with him Puck, Roland's pony, and often looking at the empty saddle. He asks at the station, in an indifferent tone, if Roland had not arrived, as if he were expecting his return from a journey. No one had seen him. Sonnenkamp rides back to the villa, and asks hurriedly if he has not come, and when they say no, he rides to the next station up the river. He asks here also, but less cautiously, and here nothing is known. The servants rush hither and thither as if bewildered.

Sonnenkamp returns to the villa; the Major is there; Fräulein Milch has sent him, as perhaps he can render some assistance. She thinks that Roland has certainly gone to the convent. The Major and Sonnenkamp drive to the telegraph-office, and send a message to the convent; they are extremely impatient, for there is no direct telegraphic communication, and so it will be two hours before an answer can be returned. Sonnenkamp desires to wait here, and sends the Major to the town, where he was to see the doctor, and make inquiries everywhere, but not so as to excite any observation.

Sonnenkamp goes up and down at the station, and places his hot brow against the cool stone pillars; all is quiet and empty. He went into the passengers' room; he found that the seats at the station were not made for comfortable rest; it was horribly inhuman. In America it is different, or it isn't — no matter.

He went out; he saw the men loading a freight-car, — they did it so leisurely; he looked at a stone-cutter who was using a pick and a hammer: he looked fixedly at him as if he himself wanted to learn the trade. People everywhere were working so quietly; they might well do so, they had not lost a son. He observed the telegraph-wires, he had an impulse to cry throughout the whole world, even where it would be of no possible avail,—

"Where is my son?"

Night comes on. The railway-train rolls in, and Sonnenkamp steps back in terror; it seems to him that the locomotive would rush directly upon him. He composes himself, he looks about, he strains his eyes, he sees nothing of Roland. The people disperse, and all is again still.

Sonnenkamp went to the telegraphist, and asked again if the telegram which had been sent had reached its destination. The reply was, "Yes." The clicking of the telegraph-lever thrilled him; he felt the same blows in his throbbing temples. He requested the operator to remain there during the night, as one could not tell but that a message might be sent to him, or he might want to send one.

But the operator refused, although a large sum of money was offered him; he was not allowed to change the arrangements without orders from his superiors. He ordered his assistant to stay there as long as he himself remained; he closed the door with a bang, and went off. He was evidently afraid of Sonnenkamp.

Sonnenkamp was again alone. Then he heard the stroke of oars on the river.

"Is it you, Herr Major?" he cried out into the starlight night.

"Yes."

"Have you found him?"

"No."

The Major got out of the boat; there was no trace of Roland in the town. An answer could not be received from the convent before early the next morning. Now the thought presented itself, that perhaps Roland was with Count Wolfsgarten. A messenger was sent thither, and they returned to the villa.

When Sonnenkamp extended his hand to the Major to help him into the carriage the latter said, —

"Your hand is so cold to-day."

It shot through Sonnenkamp's brain, like an arrow, that he had wanted to punish the boy to-day. If the boy, with this thought in his mind, had drowned himself in the waters of the Rhine!

The ring on his thumb burned into his flesh, as if it were red-hot.

Joseph met them on their way back to the villa.

"Is he there?" cried the Major. Son-

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nenkamp could not himself ask the question.

"No; but the gracious lady has got hold of it."

In the village through which they drove, people were still standing together in groups, and chatting in the mild spring-night. They met the priest, and Sonnenkamp requested him to accompany them to the villa.

When they arrrived at the court of the villa, Sonnenkamp remained sitting in the carriage, as if he had lost himself, and did not get out until he was spoken to. He gained strength and self-possession after his feet touched the ground.

Lights flitted to and fro, and shone through the lofty windows of the house. Now a shriek was heard, and he hurried in. In the great saloon, Frau Ceres, in her night-dress, was kneeling before a chair, her face hidden in the cushion. The priest stood by her side, Fräulein Perini was pouring an effervescent powder into a glass. Sonnenkamp went quickly to his wife, placed his hand upon her shoulder, crying, —

"Ceres, be quiet."

The lady turned round, glared at him with glowing eyes, then sprang up, tore open the garment on his breast, shrieking, —

"My son! give me my son, you —"

Sonnenkamp held his broad hand over her mouth; she tried to bite him, but he kept her mouth closed, and she was still.

Sonnenkamp requested the priest and Fräulein Perini to leave his wife; Fräulein Perini hesitated, but a wave of his hand gave her decided orders to go. She and the Ecclesiastic left the room. Now Sonnenkamp took Frau Ceres up in his arms, as if she were a child; carried her in to her chamber, and laid her upon the bed. Her feet were cold, and he wrapped a cloth around them in such a manner, that they were firmly bound. After a while, Frau Ceres slept, or only pretended to be asleep; it was the same either way. He went out into the balcony-chamber, where the Ecclesiastic, the Major, and Fräulein Perini were sitting together. He urged the priest to betake himself to rest, thanking him very warmly; he said the same to Fräulein Perini, with an odd mingling of courteousness and authoritativeness in his manner; he requested the Major to stay with him.

For an hour he sat with the Major at the open balcony-door, looking up at the starry heaven and listening to the rushing river; then he requested the Major to go to bed; the day would enable them to proceed quietly on sure ground. He himself lay down in the ante-chamber to his wife's room; he went again softly to her bed, shading the light with his hand; she was sleeping quietly, with burning cheeks.

All was still at the villa. Sonnenkamp was waked up when the messenger returned from Wolfsgarten; they knew nothing of Roland there.

"Is Herr von Pranken coming?" asked Sonnenkamp. The messenger did not know.

Sonnenkamp was very weary, and exhausted from want of sleep, but he could not rest; he stood at the balcony and listened to the singing of the birds and the rushing of the river; he saw the sun rise in the heavens, he heard the clocks strike; the whole world, so fresh and beautiful, seemed to him a chaos. His daughter at the convent, and his wife ready, at any moment, to testify the most horrible things against him, and his son disappeared, leaving no trace! Perhaps his corpse is floating yonder in the water! It seemed to Sonnenkamp, for a moment, as if he must throw himself headlong from the balcony, and put an end to his life. Then he stood erect and took a fresh cigar.

He went down into the park; the trees were quivering noiselessly in the early dawn, and their leaves rustled and whispered when the morning sunbeam stirred them into music and motion. The birds were carroling; they had their home and their family, and to them no child was missing——

Sonnenkamp wandered hither and thither. This soil is his, these trees are his, everything is green, blooming, breathing a fresh life. Does he still breathe for whom all this had life, for whom it all was to live, for whom it was planted and set in order?

"Why is it? why is it?" shrieked Sonnenkamp through the park. No reply came from without; perhaps one came from within, for he pressed both hands, doubled up, against his breast.

He came into the orchard. There stood the trees, whose branches he had shaped according to his pleasure; they stood in full blossom, and now, in the first morning beam, the blossoms were falling down like a low rustling rain upon the ground, that looked white as if covered with flakes of snow.

The lighter the morning became, the more confident did Sonnenkamp feel that Roland was floating there a corpse in the river, which was now of a reddish purple, a stream of blood; the far-extending water was nothing but blood! He uttered a deep groan, and stretched out his hand, as if he must grasp and throttle something. He

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seized hold of a tree and shook it, and shook it again and again, so that there was scarcely a blossom left upon it; he stood there covered all over with the petals. And now he broke out into a scornful laugh.

"Life shall not vanquish me! Nothing! Not even thou! Roland, where art thou?"

At this instant he saw a white form, with a strange head-covering, glide through the orchard, and vanish behind the trees. What is that? He rubbed his eyes. Was that a mere fancy, or was it a reality?

He went after the apparition.

"Stop," he cried, "there are steel-traps there, there's a spring-gun there!" A woman's voice uttered a lamentable shriek. Sonnenkamp went up to her, and Fräulein Milch stood before him. "What do you want here? What's the matter?"

"I wanted the Herr Major."

"He is still asleep."

"I may also tell you," Fräulein Milch began, composing herself, "it leaves me no rest."

"Out with it, — no preliminaries!"

Fräulein Milch drew herself up haughtily and said, —

"If you are in that humor, I can go away as I came."

"Excuse me, what then do you want?" he asked gently.

"I had a suggestion for you."

Sonnenkamp composed himself to listen patiently, and nodded to her to go on. She now said that she could not rest, she did not know whether the Major had suggested it. Sonnenkamp broke off impatiently a blossoming twig, and Fräulein Milch continued, — she thought that the Herr Captain Dournay might perhaps know where Roland was; they ought to telegraph to him.

Sonnenkamp thanked the old dame with a very obliging smile, and said, exercising great self-command, that he would wake up the Major, and send him into the garden; but Fräulein Milch begged that he might be allowed to take his sleep quietly. She turned back to her house, and Sonnenkamp walked on through the park.

The roses had bloomed out during the night, and from hundreds of stems and bushes sent their fragrance to their owner, but he was not refreshed by it. Here is the park, here are the trees, here is the house, all this can be acquired, can be won. But one thing cannot be won: a life, a child's life, a child's heart, a union of soul with soul, which can never be sundered, and can never come to an end.

And again came to him that cutting sentence, — You have killed the noblest impulses in your fellow-men, the feeling of father, and mother, and child. Now it is you who suffer!

Why does the word of that opponent in the New World hover around him to-day, to-day, as it did yesterday? Is that terrible man, perchance, on board that boat which is now steaming up the stream in the first morning light?

He could not imagine that, at this very moment, the child of this man was speaking to his own child:

CHAPTER XII.

WHAT IS STIRRING BY NIGHT.

The roses in the garden, and in the youth's soul, all opened during the night.

To Eric! Roland's open mouth would have said, but no sound was uttered, he said it only to himself. It was a clear starlight-night, the waning moon, in its third quarter, hung in the heavens, giving a soft light, and Roland was penetrated with such a feeling of gladness, that he often threw out his arms, as if they were wings with which he could easily fly. He went at a quick pace, as if he were pursued; he heard steps behind him, and stopped; it was only the echo of his own footsteps.

At a distance a group of men, standing still, were waiting for him. He came nearer; they were wooden posts, painted black, intended to fence in a vineyard. He moderated his pace, and would have sung, but he feared to betray himself by any sound. He stood still upon an elevation, and heard far below upon the river the wheezy puffing of a tow-boat; he saw the lights upon the masts of the boats in tow, and they moved along so wonderfully! He counted them, and there were seven.

"They are also awake," he said to himself, and it occurred to him, for the first time, that people were obliged to be awake, and to labor at night to earn their living, as the engineers there on the tow-boat, the helmsmen, and the boatmen on the boats in tow.

Why is this? What forces men to this? The boy angrily shook his head. Why did this trouble him? He walked on over the high level plain, and then ascended a hill behind it. He took a childlike pleasure that his shadow accompanied him. He kept always the middle of the road; the ditches by the wayside looked dismal and haunted. He was startled at the shadows which the trees cast in the light of the moon, and was glad when he came where it was clear and bright. When he drew near to a village, he felt secure, for although everybody was asleep, yet he was in the midst of human

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beings. The boy had been told that, by night, thieves and murderers go about on all the roads to rob and to murder. What did he have about him for them to rob? His watch and chain. He took out his watch, wanting to conceal it.

"For shame!" he suddenly cried. He became conscious how afraid he was in the depth of his soul; he would not be afraid. He boldly summoned up the dangers which he wanted to encounter, rejoiced over them, and cried aloud, —

"Come on! Here am I, and here is Devil too! Isn't it so, Devil? Just let them come on!" he said to the dog caressingly. The dog leaped up to him.

He passed through a village. All were asleep, except that here and there a dog barked, scenting Devil's proximity. Roland ordered him to be quiet, and he obeyed. The boy recognized the village as the one where he had been with the doctor and Eric on Sunday; here was the house where the man had died; here on the opposite side was the gymnastic ground, where he had exercised with Eric. At last he came to the house of Sevenpiper, where the entire orchestra were now asleep. He stood awhile, considering whether he should not wake up some one in the house, either to go with him, or to be sent to his father. He rejected both suggestions and went on.

The night was perfectly still; the only sound was the occasional barking of a dog at a distance, as if disturbed in his sleep. A brook rippled by the wayside, and he was glad to hear its strange sound; it went as if chatting with him for a while, and then disappeared, and all was silent. He passed through a ravine, where it was so dark from the high trees on both sides that he could not see the path; quietly composing himself, he went forward, thinking how beautiful it must be there in the clear daylight. He emerged from the ravine, and was rejoiced to be in the highway again. Over the ridge of a mountain shone a star, so large, so brilliant, always going up higher, and gleaming so brightly! Does Manna know what star this is?

There was a light in the first house of a village; he stopped. He heard voices. The woman inside was mourning and lamenting, that, on the morrow, her only cow was to be sold. Taking his resolution quickly, Roland placed several gold pieces upon the window-sill of the lower room, and knocked on the window-pane, crying, —

"You people! there is some money for the cow upon the sill."

He ran breathlessly away, a sort of trouble coming over him, as if he were a thief; he did not stop until he had gone some distance, crouching down in a ditch. He could not tell why he had run from there. As he now lay there and hearkened whether the people followed him, he laughed merrily to himself, to think that it must seem to them to have been some spirit that goes about healing men's sorrows, and making them grateful. No one came. He went on vigorously, happy in the thought of what he had done, and thinking that when he had a great deal of money — as he would have at some time — he would go about secretly in the world, and thus make everybody happy wherever his footsteps went.

When he fixed his gaze again upon the path, he saw a strange-looking man in the field by the wayside, who was aiming a gun directly at him. Roland, trembling, stood still, and asked the man what he wanted; the man did not move. Roland set the dog upon him, and the dog came back, shaking his head. Roland went up to the form, and laughed and trembled at the same time, to find that it was nothing but a scarecrow.

A wagon, groaning under its heavy load, came nearer and nearer. It was a strange creaking and clattering, as the wagon swayed upon its axle, and the wheels grated upon and crushed the stones. Roland came to the conclusion that the wagon had only two wheels, and was drawn by one horse. He kept still, in order to determine this, and then he heard the sound of several hoofs. He awaited the approach of the wagon, and saw that there were two horses harnessed tandem to a wagon with only two wheels. Roland went on one side, and waited for the wagon to go by; the driver walked near it, whistling and cracking his whip. Roland walked on, keeping at a little distance behind the wagon. A fearfulness had taken possession of the youthful wanderer by night, and now he felt himself near a human being who was awake; if any danger threatened he could call upon him. "Yes," he said inwardly to himself, "this is how I would call out, —

"'Help! help!'"

But no danger presented itself. And he said to his dog, as if in derision, —

"Shame that nobody assails us, to give us both a chance to show how courageous we are."

But he was terrified when all at once he heard nothing more of the wagon; it had stopped at the toll-gate. When it again creaked he was in good spirits once more. The wagon halted at the first house of the next village. The hostler, who seemed to have been expecting the driver, was not a little amazed to see, by the light of the lan-

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tern which he had with him, a handsome boy with sparkling eyes. "Hi! who may this be?" the servant cried, leaving his mouth wide open with astonishment and terror, for the great dog sniffed about his legs, then placed himself in front of the terrified fellow, showing all his teeth, and blinking back to his master, as if waiting for the watchword, "Seize him!"

Roland ordered the dog to come away. There must have been something in his voice that produced a feeling of respect in the driver and in the servant.

They asked him whether he would not also take a drink. Roland said yes. And he sat now at table, touching glasses with the teamster by the light of a solitary oil lamp. The servant was inquisitive, and said with a smirk, pointing to Roland's delicate hand, —

"That's a splendid finger-ring; how that stone does shine! That is worth ever so much, isn't it? You! make me a present of that."

The landlord, in the sleeping-room adjoining, hearing this, came in, ghostlike, in his shirt and drawers. Roland was now asked who he was, whence he came, and where he was going. He gave an evasive answer.

The teamster left, and Roland, keeping by his side, listened to the narration of his way of life. He learned that the wagon was loaded with new stone bottles, which were carried to a neighboring mineral-spring, and thence were sent into all the world, even as far as Holland. Roland was astonished to find how many kinds of occupation were requisite, before the mineral-water was drunk at his father's table. For the teamster, Holland was the end of the world; he was amazed when Roland told him that there were many countries, even whole divisions of the earth, much farther off than Holland. The teamster was surprised at Roland's extensive knowledge, and inquired if he had ever been so far away.

Roland gave an indirect reply. And now the teamster told him that he himself was an honest fellow, that he had earned by hard work everything which he had upon his back, and he would go hungry and beg, before he would get anything by dishonest means. He advised Roland, if he had done anything which made him afraid of being punished — if perhaps he had stolen the ring — he had better return and give everything up. Roland set the man at rest.

The road led through a small forest of handsome oak-trees. The screeching of an owl was heard, sounding like a mocking laugh.

"Thank God," said the teamster, "that you are with me; did you hear that laugh?"

"That is no laugh, that was a screech-owl."

"Yes, screech-owl — that's the laughing spirit."

"The laughing-spirit? Tell me what that is."

"Yes; my mother heard it once in broad daylight, when she was just a little girl. The children were at one time out there in the wood, to get acorns. You perhaps know that they shake down the acorns and place a white cloth under the tree, and catch them in that; it makes the best food for hogs. Well, the children are in the woods on a fine afternoon in autumn, the boys get up into the tree and shake down the acorns, and there is such a rattling! Then they hear, all at once, in the thicket a loud laugh. 'What is that?' — 'O,' says my mother, 'that is a spirit. 'What!' says a saucy fellow there, 'if it's a spirit, then I will just for once take a look at him.' He goes into the thicket, and when he once gets into the thicket, there sits a mighty little dwarf upon a tree-stump; his head is almost bigger than his whole body, he is gray all over, and he has a long gray beard. And the boy asks, 'Is't you that laughed so?' 'Nobody else,' says the dwarf, and laughs once more, exactly as before. 'You have shaken down the acorns, but there is one fallen down under the cloth, deep into the moss, that you will not find, and out of that acorn will grow up a tree, and when it is large enough it will be cut down, and out of one part of the boards a cradle will be made, and out of the other part a door, and a child will be laid in the cradle, and when that child shall open that door for the first time, I shall be released. Until that time I must wander about, because I have been a forest-trepasser, and lived on dishonest means.' The little dwarf laughs again, and then vanishes into the tree-stump. Since then he's been heard many a time, but nobody's seen him again. Everybody knows the oak-tree in the forest, but no one disturbs it."

Roland shuddered. He did not believe in the story, but he gave attention while the teamster continued to relate to him how hard it was to get rid of possessions dishonestly acquired.

Gradually it began to be twilight. Roland extended his hand to the teamster, and bade him good-bye, as he wished to stay

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here and wait awhile.' The teamster seated himself upon the wagon-shafts, and fixed himself comfortably, as it was now day, and he could doze a little.

The boy sat down upon a pile of stones, gazing into vacancy, and listening to the gradual dying away in the distance of the rattling and creaking wagon. For the first time in his life, he represented to himself in imagination the way in which a human being lives. He saw, as in a dream, the teamster arriving at his place of destination, he saw him lying in the shed upon the bundle of hay which he afterwards threw to his horses.

Roland had never yet been so alone, so without attendance, so conscious that no one could call to him; it seemed that he now saw, for the first time, the world and all that is in it. He followed the path of a little beetle, which crept swiftly along the ground and scrambled up a stalk.

Incomprehensible thoughts were stirring in his youthful spirit. What an infinite fulness of existence is the world! In the hedges of wild roses, just opening their buds by the roadside, sat motionless beetles and insects of all kinds, and a great buzzing and humming came from one open flower-cup to another. Here had beetles, butterflies, flies, and spiders spent the night, and the well-roofed snails were quietly housed upon the twigs.

He saw a field-mouse come out of its hole; first it remained resting upon the edge, listening, looking round, moving its chaps, and finally it slipped out, and quickly disappeared into another hole among the grass. A variegated beetle, in the early morning, ran across the field-path, fearing the public road, and feeling perfectly safe only among the thicket of the grain.

A hare ran out, and Devil sprang after him; Roland involuntarily felt at his side to seize hold of his gun.

As if emerging from beneath the surface of an overwhelming flood of impressions, Roland rose up. The sun had risen; he could not endure its splendor, and with eyes fixed upon the ground he went on. But his step lagged, for a voice spoke in him: —

"Turn back to father and mother!" But suddenly he cried aloud, —

"Eric!"

"Eric!" was repeated again in multiple echoes, and Roland walked on now, as if called by the mountains themselves. It seemed to him, not as if he walked, but as if he were lifted up and carried along. The night without sleep, the wine, all that he had experienced, excited his imagination, and it seemed as if he must now meet with something which no one else had ever met with — something inexpressible, incomprehensible, miraculous. He looked round, expecting to see it; something must certainly come to him and say, "For thee have I waited; art thou here at last?" And as he thus looked round, he noticed that the dog had left him. The wood yonder was near, the dog had evidently run after a hare or a wild rabbit. Roland whistled, he wished to call aloud, "Devil! Devil!" but he did not utter the word. He called the old name, "Griffin!" The dog bounded towards him, his tongue lolling from his mouth; he was wet with the dew of the corn-field through which he had run. Roland found it difficult to keep the dog off, for he seemed perfectly happy to have his name again; he looked up intelligently, panting quickly.

"Yes, your name is Griffin!" Roland cried to him. "Now down!" The dog kept close to his feet.

As the road now led through the forest, Roland turned aside, and laid himself down on the moss under a fir-tree; the birds sang over his head, and the cuckoo called. The dog sat near him, and seemed almost jealous that Roland did not vouchsafe him a single glance. Roland parted his jaws, and took delight in the magnificent teeth; then he said, — his own hunger might have made him think of it, —

"The next place we come to where there's a butcher, you shall have a sausage."

The dog licked his chaps, jumped round and round as if he understood the words, chased the crows which were that early looking for their food in the field, and barked at the rising sun.

The tired boy was soon asleep; the dog placed himself by his side, but he knew his duty, and did not lie down; he remained sitting, and resisted sleep. Occasionally he winked, however, as if it were hard work to keep his weary eyes open; then he shook his head, and kept faithful watch by his master. Suddenly Roland awoke. A child's voice awakened him.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE LILY OF THE VALLEY.

ROLAND rubbed his eyes; before him stood a child, a little girl in a snow-white dress and blue sash. Her face was rosy, great blue eyes beamed out from it, and long golden curls hung loose over her neck. In her hand she held a bunch of wild-flowers.

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Griffin stood in front of the child, and kept her from coming nearer.

"Back, Griffin!" cried Roland, rising; the dog fell behind his master.

"This is the German forest!" said the child with a foreign accent, and a voice that might belong to a princess in a fairy tale. "This is the German forest! I have only been gathering flowers. Are you the forest prince?"

"No, but who are you?"

"I have come from America. My uncle brought me here this morning, and now I am to stay in Germany."

"Come, Lilian! Where are you staying so long?" cried a man's voice from the road.

Roland saw through the trees an open carriage, and a tall, stately gentleman with snow-white hair.

"I'm coming directly," answered the child; "I have some beautiful flowers."

"Here, take this one from me," said Roland, gathering a full-blown lily of the valley.

The little girl threw down all the flowers which she held, took Roland's, cried, "Good-bye," and ran to the carriage. The man lifted her in as she pointed back to the wood; the carriage rolled away, and Roland stood once more alone.

Whoever could then have looked down from the vault of heaven would have seen a marvel, for at the very moment when the child was talking with Roland, Sonnenkamp stood on the terrace, lost in thoughts which made him shiver in the frosty morning air.

Roland pressed his hand to his brow. Had it really happened, or had he only dreamed? He still heard the roll of the carriage in the distance, and the plucked flowers on the ground bore witness that he was living in the actual world. But had the child really said that she was from America? Why had he not followed her then? Why had he not spoken to the old man? And now no one could tell him who they were, and whither the child had gone.

For a while Roland gazed at the flowers before him, but picked up none of them. Griffin barked at him, as if to say, Yes, and men assert that there are no more miracles! He sniffed round the gathered flowers, then ran off on the track of the child and of the carriage, as if he wished to fulfil his master's desire to detain the people, that he might talk with them. Roland whistled and called him; Griffin came, and Roland reproved him:—

"You don't deserve to have any sausage, you are so unfaithful."

Griffin lay down beseechingly at his feet; he could not explain how good his intention had been.

"Well, now we will go," said Roland. And they took up their march again.

He heard the whistle of a locomotive in the distance, and went in that direction. The wood was soon passed, and the road led again through vineyards. On a side-path Roland saw several women carrying powdered slate, from a great heap, into a newly-planted vineyard. On its border, near a hedge, burned a fire, close to which stood pots, whose contents an old woman was stirring with a dry bough. Roland stopped, and the old woman called out to ask him to join them; he went up to the group, and saw that coffee was boiling. The other women, young and old, came nearer, and there was much jesting and laughter. They turned their baskets up and sat upon them; such a seat was also prepared for Roland, and a sort of cushion placed upon it, as they asked him whether he were not a prince. Roland answered, no; but it flattered him to be taken for a prince in this way; he was very condescending, and knew how to joke with his companions. An old vine-dresser, the director of the work, told Roland, whom he held in some regard as being of the masculine gender, that he drank no coffee: it was a stupid custom, which sent money out of the country to America, never to come back.

Roland was struck by this second mention of America. The whole party listened attentively when he told them that it was not coffee, but sugar, which came from America.

"And our sugar," said the old woman, "has all staid in America, for we haven't any."

The first cup, and the cream off the milk, were given to Roland, with a bit of black bread. He wished to give the people something in payment, but now discovered that he had not his porte-monnaie about him. He knew that he had had it in the inn; the knavish-looking hostler must certainly have stolen it from him. He soon overcame his trouble about the lost money, however, and told the people that, some time or other, he would show kindness to a stranger, in return for what he had received.

He wandered on. He had learned what it was to enjoy the kindness and bounty of poor men, now that he was himself poor and helpless; that was his best experience.

The world is beautiful and men are good, even if a hostler could not resist a well-filled purse. With these cheering thoughts, he went on his way and soon reached the railway-station. He had carefully avoided any of the nearer stations, where he was known

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and might easily be traced; he wished, after making a circuit, to take the cars at a distant point.

Here Roland was accosted, like an old acquaintance, by a man in worn-out clothes, and with one boot and one old slipper on his feet.

"Good-morning, my dear Baron! good-morning!" cried this shabby-looking personage, coming close up to him.

It was doubly disagreeable in this fresh morning, after such a night, to come within the atmosphere of this man so impregnated with brandy, who was excessively confiding in his manner towards Roland. A railway official, in the most polite manner, begged the half-drunken fellow to leave the traveller in peace; he nodded knowingly to Roland from a distance, as if there were some important secret between them. Roland learned that the man belonged to a respected family of the nobility: his relations had wished to help him, and had made him an annual allowance, but it was of no use. Now he was boarding with a baggage-master, and his whole amusement was in the railroad. Every one showed him due respect, because he was a baron, and very much to be pitied.

Roland shrank from the man as if he were a ghost. The excitement of the night, and of all which he had been through, was still affecting him, yet the thought was present to him how strange it was that a half-witted, half-intoxicated man should be so respectfully treated, simply because he was a baron.

Roland succeeded in borrowing money for his journey from the restorator at the station, with whom he left his diamond ring in pawn. He bought a ticket for the university-town, and at last took his seat in the car, where he could not refrain from saying to a fellow-passenger, —

"Ah! it is good that we are off."

His neighbor stared at him; he could not know how happy it made the sorely weary boy, to be carried along towards Eric without any effort of his own.

"Where lies your way, Herr Baron?" asked the neighbor,

Roland named his destination, but looked in surprise at the man who called him Baron; had he become one in the course of the night? At a junction, where a new set of officials took charge of the train, his neighbor, who was leaving it, said to one of them, —

"Attend to the young Baron, who is sitting there."

Roland was pleased to be so called, and a peculiar feeling came over him of the satisfaction one must have in being really a baron; then one would have a lasting title with lasting honors in the world. The thought only passed through his mind, and quickly vanished, as he began directly to imagine Eric's pleasure at seeing him; his face glowed with impatience and longing.

Suddenly a painful thought struck him. Where had he left the dog? He had quite lost or forgotten him. But on rolled the cars through valleys, cuts, and tunnels, and it seemed to Roland a year, since he left his home.

Not far from the university, where the road again divided, some students entered the train. They soon let their fellow-passengers understand that they had performed the great exploit of drinking a May-bowl at their fathers' expense: for anybody could drink native wine. They had also brought some provision into the car, and in their generosity or their ostentation they wanted Roland to drink with them, but he declined with as much modesty as decision.

Twilight had gathered when they reached the university-town.

Roland asked for Doctor Dournay; one of the students, a fine-looking youth who had kept aloof from the noisy party, told him to come with him, as he lived near the widow of the professor. As Roland went with him, a strange fear came upon him: what if he could not find Eric? or if Eric would have nothing more to do with him? How much might have happened since they parted!

With beating heart he ascended the steep, dark, wooden staircase. At the top, the door of a room opened, and at the door stood a woman, who asked, —

"Whom do you wish to see?"

"The Herr Captain Dournay."

"He is away from home."

CHAPTER XIV.

A NEW SON.

ROLAND asked to be allowed to come in and wait, and was led into the sitting-room; the servant maid told him that Eric had gone to the capital, but might possibly return that day. His mother had gone to the grave of a son, of whose death this was the anniversary. The maid went out to light the lamp, and Roland was alone in the room where the twilight shadows gathered; he sat in the corner of a sofa, weary, and his mind full of varied thoughts.

Wonderful! there are so many human dwellings in the world, one can enter them, and all at once one is seated in a strange house.

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Outside, in accordance with an old custom, there sounded from the tower a choral, played by trumpets. Roland dreamed of the outer world, no longer conscious where he was, but remembering only that he had once travelled through many countries and towns, and that everywhere in the houses lived men, who led their own lives, of which other people knew nothing.

Eric's mother entered. She stopped at the door, as Roland rose, saying, —

"Good-evening, mother."

Stretching out her arms, the mother cried, —

"In Heaven's name, Hermann — thou?"

"My name is not Hermann. I am Roland."

The mother approached him trembling; just then the aunt came in with a light, and all was explained. Roland said that he had followed Eric, because he wished never to leave him. The mother kissed him, weeping and sobbing.

Steps were heard on the stairs, and Eric entered. Roland had no strength to rise from his seat as Eric exclaimed, —

"You — here!"

Roland could hardly utter the words to explain what he had done. He stared wildly at Eric, who stood before him like a stranger, without even holding out his hand. As soon as Roland had finished speaking, Eric said sternly, —

"If you were my son, I would punish you severely for your self-will, and the anxiety you have caused your family."

"You may punish me, I will not stir. No one in the world could punish me like you; you do not punish like ——"

The beating of his heart prevented his finishing what he was about to say, and perhaps also an aversion to complaining of his father restrained him. He had forgotten till now what had last incited him to run away, and only remembered the longing for Eric; now he looked around him, as if he saw his father's upraised hand in the air.

The mother took him again into her arms, saying, —

"Your willingness to bear punishment atones for and washes out everything."

"Stay here with my mother," said Eric, sternly; "I will come back directly."

He hurried out, and sent a telegram to Herr Sonnenkamp, with the inquiry whether he would come for Roland, or wished to have him brought home.

When Eric returned, he found Roland already asleep on the sofa. He was tired out, and it was with great difficulty that they could awaken him to be put to bed. Eric sat a long time with his mother, talking of the wonderful manner in which fate seemed playing with them.

His mother related how, as she came from the churchyard, the painful thought had oppressed her that even she, his own mother, could not quite recall how Hermann had looked. She could bring his face to mind, because it was preserved in the photograph which hung, in its frame of immortelles, just over her sewing-machine in the bay-window. But Hermann's motions, his gait, his way of throwing back his head with its thick brown hair, of laughing, jesting, and caressing; the sound of his voice, the low, dove-like laugh, — all these had vanished from her — his mother. So she had walked on, with downcast eyes, often stopping, as she tried hard to call up the image of the lost one. So she had come home, and here came to meet her a form like Hermann, and it had cried out to her, — "Good-evening, mother!" in his very tone. She could not tell why she had not fainted, and she spoke now of Roland with the same delight which Eric had felt when he saw him for the first time.

Eric, on his side, told her of the reasons for and against undertaking the school, and then of the Minister's offer. He would there enter a position which his father had not reached, and which would, perhaps, have saved his life. The idea of receiving an appointment by inheritance, and through favor, without any merit of his own, oppressed him somewhat.

His mother soothed both these scruples, which were really one, and quite uncalled for, as he had the right to collect the debt which was due to his father, and still more if it was over due.

Very lightly she touched upon the good fortune of the nobility, in being able to receive what had been stored up by past generations, and to hand it down to future descendants. With a slightly jesting tone she said, —

"Our professor of political economy used to say that capital was accumulated labor; so family standing is nothing but accumulated honor."

There were times, though they were rare, when the mother, from the standpoint of her inherited opinions and habits, saw in many of the sentiments and views of the burgher class an obstinate and perverse independence which she could not approve. In her husband this had rarely and slightly shown itself, but in Eric it was more active; he had that haughty self-reliance which makes a man unwilling to thank any one but himself for his position and power.

She had never repented leaving her own

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class to marry her husband, she had been too happy for that; but she saw in Eric's position something like a grievous consequence of her own act. Moved by these thoughts, which she never expressed, she said, —

"I can easily understand how you feel drawn to this American; there is the greatest honor in being a self-made man. Let us unite the two plans then. You can bring it about, since the boy is in your hands, that the American shall entrust him to you, and you can at the same time maintain an independent position."

Eric replied that his objection to the situation did not consist simply in his receiving it as a favor; the task of conducting foreign visitors of princely rank through the art-collections was distasteful to him; he did not think that he could conform himself to it.

Suddenly his mother remembered that a letter had come for him, and she gave it to him. It was from Clodwig. The noble man placed at Eric's disposal twice the sum that he had asked for. Eric was made happy by this news, and his mother nodded with hearty assent when he said that the gift rejoiced him, but still more did the assurance that his confidence in men had met with so glorious a confirmation.

Midnight was past, and mother and son still sat together. Eric begged his mother to go to bed and leave him to wait for Sonnenkamp's reply. He sat long alone in the night, thinking over all which had passed, till sleep overcame him.

In the spirits of men, as well as in the history of nations, thoughts and sentiments are formed which are to be brought into action from their own free will, when suddenly there comes an over-mastering fact, which converts the free choice into an inevitable necessity. Thus Eric's entrance into Sonnenkamp's household seemed to have been made an unavoidable necessity by Roland's rash step.

Eric went again, with scarcely audible steps, into the boy's room. So wholly was his spirit turned toward him that the sleeping child moaned, "Eric," but soon, turning over, slept soundly again.

Eric went back to the sitting-room, and then it first occurred to him that there was no night-watch at the telegraph office in Sonnenkamp's neighborhood; the father could not receive the news till morning. Eric also now went to bed.

Everything was late in the house of the professor's wife the next morning; Eric slept longest. When he entered the sitting-room, he found Roland already with his mother, holding a small wooden coffee-mill in his left hand and turning it with his right. This mill was an heir-loom which had belonged to Eric's grandfather, who had been a distinguished anatomist at the university. The mother had already told Roland this, and had shown him all sorts of ancient household furniture, also relics of the times of the Huguenots.

"Ah, how pleasant it is here with you!" cried Roland to Eric, as he entered.

Something of long-established family existence opened upon the young spirit, and, at this morning hour, with the friendly eyes of three people resting upon him, Roland felt very content in the simple, old-fashioned, domestic life.

CHAPTER XV.

AN EXTRA TRAIN.

"I'VE been through a great deal, but that I should ever be obliged to go through this! If we can only come out of this with a whole skin! This may be called a wanton exposure of one's life — and one has no weapons of defence."

Such were the Major's words, stammered out at intervals, as he held on to a tassel of a first-class railway car, and looked sorrowfully at the dog Laadi lying at his feet, while he was travelling with Herr Sonnenkamp in an extra train. Herr Sonnenkamp appeared to feel a joy in this mad speed.

"In America," he said, "they go three times as fast in an extra train."

He seemed to experience a secret satisfaction in showing the Major that there was a courage wholly different from that of the battle-field, which he possessed and the Major did not. He had accounts to tell of trips made in America on wagers. And when they stopped to take in water, Sonnenkamp took leave of the Major, saying that he was going to ride on the locomotive, for he must try once more how that seemed.

The Major sat with Laadi alone in the only car attached to the locomotive; he stared fixedly out of the window, where trees, mountains, and villages flew by like a whirlwind, and he thanked God that Fräulein Milch knew nothing of his consenting to make such a mad trip with Herr Sonnenkamp on an extra train.

And why is this man in such a hurry? The Major does not understand it. Sometimes he was stingy about a kreuzer, and so very modest that he wished to make no show and to excite no observation, and then again he was very lavish with his money, and did every thing to attract people's at-

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tention. The Major did not understand the man. He must certainly have been a locomotive-driver; and what is there that he may not have been!

"Yes, Laadi," exclaimed he, speaking to the dog, "come, lie down by me. Yes, Laadi; neither of us could ever dream of going through this! If we only once do get through it! Yes, Laadi, she will mourn for you too if we are killed."

The dog growled away to himself; he must have been full of wrath also at the fool-hardy Sonnenkamp.

Madder and madder was the speed: down they went over descending grades near the river, and the Major expected every instant that the locomotive would run off the track, and the passenger-car be dashed in pieces and tumbled into the stream. Yes, there came over him such a settled fear, or rather expectation, of immediate death, that he braced his feet against the back of the seat, and thought to himself, —

"Well, death, come! God be praised, I have never harmed anybody in the world, and Fräulein Milch has been cared for, so that she will never suffer need."

Tears wet his closed eyes, and he made a strange face in order to stifle his tears; he was unwilling to die, and then, too, when there was no need of it. He opened his eyes with rage, and doubled up his fists; this extra train is wholly unnecessary; Roland was known to be in good hands. But this man is such a savage!

The Major was very angry with Sonnenkamp, and yet more with himself, for being drawn into any such mad freak. All his heroic mood was gone, he was wholly unreconciled to the position, he had been duped, this was not fit for him. Fräulein Milch is right; he is weak, he cannot say no.

Whenever he looked out he became dizzy. He found a lucky expedient; he placed himself so as to ride backwards. There one sees only what has been gone over, and not what is coming. But neither does this do any good; it is even more terrible than before, for one sees now the bold, short curves which the road makes, and the cars incline on one side as if to plunge over. And now tears actually flow out of the Major's eyes. He thought of the funeral service which the lodge would perform for him after he was dead; he heard the organ-peal, and the dirges, saying to himself, —

"You eulogize me more than I deserve, but I have been a good brother. The Builder of all the worlds is my witness that I meant to be."

The car rolled on at a more measured speed, and the Major consoled himself with the thought that no accident had ever yet happened on this road. But no, he went on thinking, perhaps one would be safer on a road where some accident has already happened; the people here are too careless, and thou must be the first victim. Which would Fräulein Milch consider the more dangerous, a road which had already experienced mishaps, or one like this, that has now to meet with them for the first time? I must take care to put the question to her. Don't forget it, Laadi, we must ask her. He had now overcome all fear, and he became so free and cheerful that he ridiculed his own apprehensions, thinking that the millionaire on the locomotive had a much greater stake involved, putting his life in peril, and that he would not do it if there were any real danger.

The dog must have scented out the peril of the rapid journey, for she was in a continual tremble, and looked up appealingly to her master.

"Thou art a lady, and thou art afraid," said the Major, addressing her. "Take courage! Thou art not so faint-hearted. Come! so — so — get up into my lap. Clean enough, clean enough," he said, smilingly, as the dog licked his hand.

And from the midst of his anguish, the Major was already pleasing himself with the thought, how, in a few days, in the quiet arbor in his garden, he will tell Fräulein Milch of the imminent peril. He caressed Laadi, and rehearsed to himself the whole story of the impending danger.

They arrived at the station where the road branches off to the university-town. Here they are told that no extra train could be furnished, as there was only one track. They must wait an hour for the next regular train.

Sonnenkamp stormed and scolded over these dawdling Europeans, who did not know how to put a railroad to its proper use; he had arranged, indeed, by telegram for a clear track. But it was of no use. The Major stood at the station, and thanked the Builder of all the worlds that all was so unalterably fixed. He went away from the river, and saluted the cornfields, where the standing corn, in its silent growth, allowed itself to be in no way disturbed out of its orderly repose; he rejoiced to hear, for the first time this season, the whistling of the quail, who has no home in the vineyard region; and he gazed at the larks singing as they flew up to heaven.

A train had come into the station and stopped. The Major heard men's voices singing finely, and he learned that many

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persons, who were already seated in the cars, were emigrating to America. He saw mothers weeping, fathers beckoning, and while the locomotive was puffing at the station, many village youths stood on the platform together, in a group, and sang farewell songs to their departing comrades. They sang with voices full of emotion, but they kept good time.

"It will rejoice Fräulein Milch when I relate this to her," thought the Major, and he mingled among those who remained behind, giving them words of consolation; he went to the emigrants and exhorted them to continue good Germans in America. In the midst of his weeping, an old man cried: —

"What are you waiting for? make it go ahead!"

The rest scolded the man for his rudeness, but the Major said, —

"Don't take it ill of him, he cannot do differently, he is too miserable." The old man nodded to the Major, and all the rest looked at him in surprise.

In the mean while, the train arrived which was to carry those going on the branch road.

"Herr Major! Herr Major!" shrieked the employés of the road from various quarters. They had great difficulty in bringing the Major over to the other side of the train.

"One might almost envy you, you are such a child; you allow yourself to be distracted by every occurrence on the way, and to be drawn away from your destination like a child."

"Yes, yes," laughed the Major — he had recovered his broad laugh — "Fräulein Milch often tells me that."

He told Sonnenkamp of the affecting parting of the emigrants and their friends, but Sonnenkamp seemed to have no interest in it. Even when the Major said that the Freemasons had taken all pains to block the game of the kidnappers who cheated the emigrants, even then, Herr Sonnenkamp remained speechless. The Major sat by him in silence.

They reached the university-town. No one was there to receive them, and Sonnenkamp was very indignant.

The family of the professor's wife were at breakfast. Roland drank his coffee out of the cup which had Hermann's name upon it, and Eric said that they must be at the station in an hour, since Herr Sonnenkamp would probably come by the express train: it was not to be supposed that he would come by the accommodation train, which had no connection with the West. Just as Eric was saying this, there was a knock; the Major walked in first, and after him, Sonnenkamp.

"Here is our devil of a boy!" cried the Major. "Here is the deserter himself!"

The awkwardness of the first interview was thus removed. Roland sat immovable upon his chair; Eric went to meet Sonnenkamp: he turned then to the boy, and ordered him to ask his father's forgiveness for what he had done. Roland complied.

The mother prayed Herr Sonnenkamp not to punish the boy for his wilfulness. His father replied, good-humoredly, that, on the contrary, this bold stroke of the boy gave him particular delight; he showed courage, resolution, and self-guidance: he would rather reward him for it. Roland looked at his father in amazement, then grasped his hand and held it fast.

Eric requested his mother and aunt to retire with Roland to the study, and he remained with the Major and Sonnenkamp. Sonnenkamp expressed his satisfaction and gratitude to Eric, who must certainly be familiar with magic, to have so bewitched his son that he could not live apart from him.

"Do you think so?" Eric asked. "I must express to you my astonishment."

"Your astonishment?"

"Yes; I have, I am sorry to say, no talent at all of that sort, but I may be permitted to say that I almost envy those who can accomplish such things."

Sonnenkamp looked inquiringly at Eric, who continued: —

"It is a master-stroke of pedagogical science that you have effected. I see now that you have declined my service in Roland's hearing, in order to induce him to act from his own free-will; this will bring him under my influence as nothing else would be likely to do."

Sonnenkamp looked amazed. Is this man making fun of him? Does he wish to ridicule him, or, by means of this refined policy, to get the better of him still farther? This would be a touch of diplomacy of the highest order. Pranken is probably right, and Eric is a wily trickster under the mask of honest plainness. Well, let it be so. Sonnenkamp whistled to himself in his inaudible way; he would appear not to see through Eric. He let it be understood that he had played a nice game with Roland, and he smiled when the Major cried: —

"Fräulein Milch said so — yes, she understand everybody, and she has said, — Herr Eric, he is the man who sees clear through Herr Sonnenkamp's policy. Yes, yes, that is a whole extra train of smartness."

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Sonnenkamp continued smiling deprecatingly and gratefully, but his astonishment was renewed, when Eric now made the declaration, —

"Unfortunately, life itself is so self-willed, that the best-laid logical chain is cut in two; I find myself obliged, on my part, to decline positively your friendly offer."

Sonnenkamp again whistled inaudibly.

Another stroke of diplomacy, then! He could not grasp him; the antagonist has enticed his foe out of his stronghold; Sonnenkamp joined battle in the open field. Eric related that he had the offer of acting director in the Cabinet of Antiquities, with the promise of a permanent appointment.

"That's it," nodded the Major to himself, "that's it, screw him, make terms for yourself, as a singer does who is in demand; you can have your own price, they must give you all you ask."

But the Major's look suddenly changed, when Eric continued, —

"From your practical American standpoint you would certainly approve of my refusal, if that were necessary, in order to attain higher conditions, whether internal or external, of my own freedom. But I tell you frankly, that I have no motive for this refusal, except the duty of gratitude towards my patron."

Sonnenkamp answered, assentingly, —

"I am very far from desiring to interfere at all with your plan of life. I regret to be obliged to give it up, but I give it up."

"Yes," interposed the Major, "you give it up, and he declines. That's no go. The youth, what is he going to do? What becomes of him?"

Sonnenkamp and Eric regarded the Major in silence, who uttered the decisive words, — "What becomes of Roland?"

Eric was the first to collect himself, and requested that Sonnenkamp would commit his son to him for a year at the capital; for he himself must acknowledge that he should no longer be happy or at rest, until he could expend his best energies for the boy, in order to establish him in a noble career in life; and that it would be the best plan for Roland also to be brought up in the companionship of others, and he would see to it that he had good companions.

Sonnenkamp pressed his fingers to his lips, and then said, —

"Such a plan cannot be talked of for a moment; my breath is gone, when I know that the child is away from me. I must therefore beseech you, not a word of this."

He now requested the Major to leave him alone with the Captain.

The Major complied at once, and did not take it at all amiss, that Sonnenkamp disposed of him so readily.

And now that they were alone, Sonnenkamp said, rubbing his chin repeatedly, —

"I see clearly the difficulty of consigning Roland to any one but you; I have already dismissed the man who was employed by me. But now, one question. Were you not, voluntarily, employed in the House of Correction?"

"Why do you ask, since the asking tells me that you already know?"

"And do you think that you can now be Roland's preceptor?"

"Why not?"

"Do you think that it will not revolt the boy, or at least deeply wound him, when he shall at some time learn by chance, that he is under a man who has had the management of convicts?"

"Roland will not learn this by chance. I shall tell him myself, and he will have understanding enough to perceive that this is no degradation of my personal worth, but — I say it with all modesty — an exaltation of it. With my own free will, and holding an honorable position, I desired to devote myself to my fallen fellow-men; and I can only regret that I must acknowledge myself to have no talent for this. I am of the conviction that every man, whatever he has done, can become once more pure and noble; I was not able, unfortunately, in that position, to carry out my conviction."

Sonnenkamp listened, with closed eyes; he nodded, and thought that he must say something laudatory to Eric, but he did not seem able to bring it out.

At last he said, —

"I have introduced this matter only to show you that I keep nothing in reserve; we are now, I hope, of one mind. Might I ask you to call the Major, and let me join the ladies?"

The Major came, and when Eric was alone with him, naturally related first of all the terrors of the extra train, and that the clattering was no longer a perceptible beat, but one continued rumble. He knew how to imitate it very exactly, and to give the precise difference of sound when going by the stations, and the mountains, and over the dikes.

Eric could have replied that he was accurately acquainted with the road; he had gone over it a few days before, without speaking a word, engaged in his own meditations, but the Major did not suffer himself to be interrupted; he asserted that no one had ever before so rode, and no one

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would ever ride so again, so long as Europe had its iron rails, for Sonnenkamp had fired up after the American fashion.

Then he said, —

"I have come to know Herr Sonnenkamp very thoroughly, since his son went away. I have, indeed, no son, and cannot enter completely into his way of expressing himself, but such lamentation, such reproaches against himself, such raving, such cursing, — our hardest corporal is a tender nun in comparison — such words he brought out. It must truly be a fact! In countries where good tobacco grows, and snakes and parrots, Fräulein Milch has said, there the soil of men's hearts is much hotter, and there things grow up, and creatures creep out and fly about, such as we have no sort of idea about. And how Frau Ceres carried on, I'll not speak of.

"But you know who first told where the youth is? Fräulein Milch told it. And do you know what she said? 'If I were a young girl, I would run after Herr Eric too, over mountain and valley.' That is to say, she has said that in all honor; she has never loved any one but me, and we have known each other now for nine and forty years, and that is something. But why do we speak of such things now? we shall have time enough for this by and by. You are right, you are smarter than I thought for; it is shrewd in you not to make terms at once. Now he has come to you, into the house, you can make whatever conditions you want to. In his raving he cried, — A million to him who restores my son to me! You can claim the million, it belongs to you; I am witness of that."

Eric declared that he was irresistibly attracted towards the boy, but that he could not come to terms, for it would be the highest kind of ingratitude if he should decline the position that had been offered to him in such a friendly way, and of which a report had certainly been made, before this time, to the Prince.

In what light would he stand with his patron, and with the Prince, who had, besides, grounds of displeasure with him, if he should now say, "Thank you kindly; I have, in the mean while, made a previous engagement elsewhere"? The Major drummed with the fore and middle fingers of his right hand rapidly upon the table, as if his fingers were drumsticks.

"Bad, very bad," he said. "Yes, yes, fate often takes an extra train too; everything has an extra train now-a-days."

Eric said, in addition, that service to an individual had its difficulty; he might perhaps be able to consent to appear ungrateful, and forfeit forever all favor, but he feared lest, in the dependent servitude to the rich man, he might often be troubled with the thought how much more free he might have been in the service of the State.

The Major continued to drum and drum, repeating the words, —

"Bad — very bad!"

He uttered the words so oddly, that it sounded like a crow, in the freshly-turned furrow, gulping down an earthworm.

CHAPTER XVI.

WE HAVE HIM.

While the Major and Eric were sitting together, Sonnenkamp was with the mother in the library; Roland and the aunt, in the recess, had a great book open before them, containing outline drawings of Greek sculpture.

The boy now looked up and cried, —

"Father, only think that Herr Eric must sell this fine library of his father's, and there is not a single leaf here that his father has not written on, and it must go now into the hands of strangers."

"It would be a favor to me," said Sonnenkamp, turning to the aunt, "if you, gracious Fräulein, would take my son out to walk; I have something to say to Frau Dournay."

Roland went away with the aunt.

Sonnenkamp now asked the professor's wife if what Roland had stated were true.

She replied in the affirmative, adding that the danger was over, as Count Wolfsgarten had furnished the required sum of money.

When Sonnenkamp heard the name and the amount, a surprising transformation seemed to take place in him. He said that he allowed no one the privilege of helping Eric in money-matters; he claimed that as exclusively his own. And now, having once begun to be beneficent, a new strength seemed to be unfolded in him; he considered himself very fortunate in being permitted to render assistance to such an excellent family, even if Eric should not remain with him.

The professor's widow could not refrain from confessing that it required great strength of soul to receive favors, and that her family were not accustomed to it. She spoke of her son.

"He is a child in feeling," she said, "without anything false, incapable of any indirection, a strong, steadfast, sincere, manly, and noble character. I ought not, as his mother, to say this, but I can only congratulate you. You can entrust to him

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that which you value most, as the precious jewel of your life, and I tell you that whoever loves Eric has a heaven in his heart, and whoever does not love him is without a heart."

Sonnenkamp rose, drawing a deep breath; he would have liked to say, How happy was that man who could call this woman mother; but he restrained himself. He stood before the flower-stand, which was artistically arranged, by an invisible contrivance, in a pyramidal shape, and all so well cared for and ordered, that it was a pleasure to behold it. He led the conversation to botany; Eric had informed him that his mother had a knowledge of it, and he was happy to meet in her an associate in his special pursuit — for he considered botany his specialty.

He turned the conversation, aptly and sympathizingly, to the lady's past history. He asked first, whether she would not take pleasure in coming, at some time, to the Rhine.

She replied that she should like much to do so, and that she had a special desire to see once more, before she died, a friend of her youth, the present Superior of the island-convent, and principal of the seminary.

"Are you so intimate with the Superior?" said Sonnenkamp, and something occurred to him which he could not make clear to himself, but he evidently impressed it upon himself to reserve this for further consideration. He smiled in a very friendly manner, when the lady dwelt at length, in a pleasant way, upon the strangeness of life. There sits a lady in her cage, and here another has her nest in a little garden, and they cannot come to each other. The older one becomes, indeed, so much the more enigmatical seem often the interwoven threads of human relations in the world.

She added, gently closing her eyes, that it had seemed so only since the death of her husband, for she had been able to say everything to him, and he had unfolded clearly and harmoniously what seemed to her a confused puzzle.

Sonnenkamp experienced something like a feeling of devotion, as the wife said this.

She made mention now of her life as a lady of the court, and her eyes glistened while speaking of the Princess dowager.

"I had not only the happiness and the honor," she said, "to visit and oversee with her, and yet oftener in her name and by her order, the many various institutions of beneficence of which her highness was the protectress, but I had the yet more important and often more melancholy, though blessed and refreshing duty, to visit those, or to institute inquiries concerning those, who applied to the Princess for assistance, often with heartrending cries for help. The greater part of the letters were entrusted to me, either to bring in a report concerning them, or to answer them. This was a sad, but, as I said before, a blessed and an ennobling service."

While the lady was thus speaking, placing at the same time her delicate, soft hand upon her heart, as if she must repress the overflowing feelings of this recollection, her whole countenance was illuminated by an inexpressible tenderness.

Sonnenkamp rose suddenly, as if some irresistible power had called to him, and there was deep feeling in his voice, as he said, —

"Might I be allowed, noble lady, to offer you a compensation, if you will be induced to live in our neighborhood? I am no prince, but I am, perhaps, as much overrun with begging letters. Our good Major frequently helps me in instituting inquiries. But you, honored lady, could render much more effectual service in this matter; and even if one cannot render assistance in every case, it is always a consolation to the poor to receive at least a friendly answer, and your look is radiant with a mother's blessing."

It was an hour in which Sonnenkamp experienced a blessedness such as he thought himself wholly incapable of receiving, and his fixed purpose was, —

"This must be; here is the starting-point in life which you have so long desired, and all the past is annihilated."

Sonnenkamp had formed an entirely different notion of the professor's widow and her sister-in-law. He saw in Eric's mother a stately lady of fine mind and high-bred manners; she was pale, and this paleness was very much increased by her black cap and her mourning dress.

The aunt seemed to him still handsomer.

It was a peculiar gesture that Sonnenkamp made in the air; it was as if he seized hold of the two ladies: for he mentally transplanted them to his splendid rooms, where they did the honors of the house, adorning his house, and his house adorning them, and when company were present a whist-table was formed, as a matter of course.

Sonnenkamp was obliged to restrain himself from asking the ladies at once whether they played whist, and with the consciousness that he was thinking about it, and with the exertion of self-control necessary to keep it to himself, his countenance assumed a variety of expressions.

During the conversation Roland had

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left the room, holding the aunt's hand; he now came in with Eric and the Major, holding in his hand a large letter with the seal of the ministry of education.

Roland said, —

"I beseech you, aunt, let me speak."

All were surprised at the appearance of the boy, who now said, holding up the letter, —

"The aunt has confided to me, that here is the decree appointing you to be director for the keeping of the beautiful bronze and marble statues of antiquity. Eric, I am not made of bronze or marble, and when you are there among those figures it will freeze you, and it will also freeze me forever, if you abandon me. Eric, don't do it; don't do it to yourself, or to me. Stay with me, I will stay with thee. I beseech you, Eric, do not leave me; I am not plaster. I am not marble; do not leave me. I beseech thee, Eric, do not forsake me — do not forsake me."

All were thrilled by this scene, and while the boy was speaking thus, the Major said in a low tone, —

"This is no child. What can it be? The lad speaks just as if a holy spirit possessed him!"

Eric went to Roland, raised him in his strong arms, held him high up, and said, —

"Roland, as I hold you now, and you hold me, so hold fast to me with all the strength of your life! We will together grow into something great; here is my hand."

The letter was forgotten. The mother begged to be permitted to open it, and she had hardly run it over, when she cried with a lightened heart, —

"Thank God, Eric, you need not be ungrateful."

The letter contained an expression of regret that the place had been already given to a young man of the nobility, who had shown himself unfitted for a diplomatic post.

Sonnenkamp requested them to let him have the letter; he might perhaps make use of it as a documemt against Eric's enemies, who charged him with being in ill-favor at court. And now he desired that mother and aunt would remove at once to Villa Eden; but Eric answered positively in the negative. He himself agreed to go, but his mother and aunt could not before the autumn; he must first become initiated, with Roland alone, into the family life.

No one was happier, that everything had turned out so well, than the Major. It was decided to start to-day. The Major promised that he and Fräulein Milch would help the mother and aunt in all the arrangements, when they removed later in the season; nothing else would do, as Fräulein Milch must be consulted in everything. He now requested leave of absence for an hour, to visit friends in the university-town, whom he did not know personally.

After the Major had gone, Sonnenkamp said, in a kindly tone of patronage, that the Major probably had some brother Freemasons to visit. Eric also asked to be excused, as he had yet to take leave of one man.

He went to see Professor Einsiedel. The Professor was always uniformly ready for every friendly call, but as uniformly angry, if, forgetting the hour of his lecture, any one came during the half hour previous; he could be very angry. His anger consisted in saying, —

"But, dear friend! how could you forget this? You must surely know that I have a lecture at two o'clock, and can now see no one. No, I must beg you very earnestly — very — very — very earnestly beg you to note my lecture-hour."

And while saying this, he pressed one's hand with great good-nature.

When Eric said that it would be of no service for him to note this for the future, as he was going to leave town to-day, Einsiedel requested to be informed of the hour when the train left; perhaps he would then meet him, but he would not make a definite promise, for if he did, it would disturb him in the delivery of his lecture.

Eric left him. The Professor went with him to the door, took off his black cap, and excused himself for not accompanying him down the steps. "I beg earnestly — very — I lecture at two," he turned back into his study. Eric was sure that the Professor would see him again.

The whole town lifted up their eyes, as the six persons were going to the station. Sonnenkamp escorted Frau Dournay, the Major the aunt, and Eric held Roland by the hand. They had to wait for the train to come in. Suddenly Professor Einsiedel made his appearance; and it was a great deal for the slender little man to do, as it interrupted the regular order of the day.

Eric introduced the Major and Sonnenkamp. Sonnenkamp had no special word to say to him, and the Major, notwithstanding his kind feelings towards everybody, could not find just the right friendly expressions with which to address this delicate, feeble-looking person, when Eric introduced him as his teacher and master. Roland, on

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the contrary, with hearty pleasure seized the hand of the little man, soft as a child's, and said, —

"Do you know how you seem to me? You are my grand-teacher; for Herr Eric is my teacher, and you are his teacher, and so you are my grand-teacher; and if you want a dog, I will send a dog to you."

Professor Einsiedel quoted some Greek words out of Plato to Eric, which expressed the joy one feels in a beautiful animated youth; then he patted the boy on the shoulder, thanked him for the offer of the dog, and said that as he did not like to bid good-bye in the rush, he would now bid them farewell before the train arrived. He considered that those who were waiting at the station had already started on their journey, and taking Eric aside, he said in a voice trembling with emotion, —

"You are well enough off, and you must also marry, for the apostle Paul says, 'Whoever careth for the things that are of the world ought to marry.'" He requested him to write more particularly concerning Clodwig's antiquities, then shook him by the hand. Roland also extended his hand to the professor.

Eric looked after the little man going away, who was in his eyes a walking temple of the spirit of wisdom; and the good little man rubbed his tender hand on his coat, for Roland had pressed it a little too hard.

The train came thundering in. The leave-taking was hurried. Roland kissed repeatedly the mother and aunt, and Sonnenkamp kissed the mother's hand.

His mother said in a low tone to Eric on taking leave, —

"You are forsaking me. I am at rest, I know you are not forsaking yourself, and so you are still with me. Go, then; hold thyself within thyself, and me in thee, and it will be well with thee, and well with me."

In the railway-car the Major bent towards Eric and whispered, —

"I have learned something about your father."

"What is it?"

"Something good for you and for me. Your father, who has gone to the eternal home, belonged to our brotherhood. It is your right to claim assistance, and my duty to give it. I only beg that you will never thank me; we are not allowed to thank one another."

At the first station the Major took Eric aside, and asked him whether he had made a positive agreement as to salary, indemnification at dismissal, and pension after the completion of the tutorship. Eric treated the subject with indifference, and the Major gave him to understand that he had full power to grant all his demands. He advised Eric to strike now while the iron was hot. But Eric not seeming at all disposed to take up with the advice, the Major desisted, murmuring to himself, —

"Here now, Fräulein Milch is always saying that I am not practical; and here now is a man who is so learned, and can turn himself round and face about seven times before I can get up on my feet, and he is ever so much less practical than I am."

The Major was almost delighted that Eric was so unpractical; he could tell Fräulein Milch all about it.

On the way the diamond ring was redeemed, and Eric said to Roland, —

"Let your father take the ring; I would prefer that you would not wear a ring for the future."

Roland gave the ring to his father, and the Major said, humming to himself, —

"He has him! He has him by bit and curb."

It was evening when they drove by the small vine-covered house. Roland pointed out the house to Eric with glistening eyes, but uttered no word. They drove into the grounds of Villa Eden, where the air was laden with the fragrance of roses, for all the roses in Sonnenkamp's garden were in fresh bloom.

"We have it," cried the architect from the castle to the Major, as he was getting out.

"Have what?"

"We have found the castle-spring."

"And we have *him*," cried the Major, pointing to Eric.

And from this day, the Major began many of his stories with the words, —

"At the time I rode with Herr Sonnenkamp in the extra train."

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THE COUNTRY-HOUSE ON THE RHINE.

PART II.

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BOOK V. CHAPTER I.

HIGH ABOVE.

The rosebuds in the garden had opened in the spring night, and rare flowers blossomed out in the soul of the youth.

With transcendent delight, Roland welcomed his recovered teacher to the house. He went in high spirits to his mother's room, but she was so exhausted that he could not see her. He forgot Fräulein Perini's distant reserve towards him, and announced to her jubilantly, that Eric was there, and would now remain; she was just to say so to his mother.

"And have you no inquiries to make about the Chevalier?"

"No: I know that he is gone; he was not with me even when he was here. Ah, forgive me, I don't know what I am saying! O, why does not the whole world rejoice!"

Roland's rejoicing received the first check when Fräulein Perini said, that no one could estimate correctly the inconsolable distress which his mother had suffered from his flight.

The boy stood still, but he felt assured that now all would go well; that everybody must now be well and strong.

He came across Joseph in the court, and joyfully informed him that he now was acquainted with his native city; he nodded to all the servants, he greeted the horses, the trees, the dogs; all must know and rejoice in the fact that Eric was here. The servants looked at Roland in astonishment, and Bertram, the coachman, drew his long beard through the fingers of both hands, and said, —

"The young master has got, during these two days, a man's voice."

Joseph smilingly added: —

"Yes, indeed, a single day at the University has made him a different being. And what a being!"

In fact, Roland was wholly different. He returned to his home as from a voyage; yes, even as from another world: he could not comprehend how everything should appear so changed, illuminated so brightly; he had been alone with himself, and had gained possession of himself in solitude.

Eric had made no definite agreement about his salary, and Sonnenkamp said to the Major, smiling: —

"These enthusiastic Idealists have a concealed policy. The man does as people do when they are invited to dinner; they let themselves be served by the host and hostess with some nice dish, and so receive a larger share than they would have helped themselves to."

Eric had only made one demand, that he should inhabit with Roland the house-turret, remote from all noise, and furnishing an extensive prospect. This was granted, and Eric felt himself strangely free in these handsome, spacious rooms, with their outlook upon the river and the landscape.

How confined is one's life in those small, close apartments of the University-town, and yet how far the spirit can extend itself beyond that narrow enclosure! And these carpets, this elegant furniture, how soon will it become an ordinary thing, forgotten and unconsidered, like the wide view of the landscape! It seemed to Eric as free, as inspiring, and as commanding, as if — he himself laughed when the comparison came into his mind — as if he were living on horseback. We can go very comfortably over hill and vale with a light walking-staff, but to sit on horseback, and course away, with a double, triple strength united to our own, and elevating us above the ordinary level, this is a rare exhilaration.

Roland came to Eric, and he expressed to the boy his joy at the beautiful and peaceful life they would live here; but Roland begged: —

"Give me something to do, something right hard; try and think of something."

Eric perceived the boy's state of excitement; sitting down near him, he took his hand, and showed him that life seldom furnished a single deed on which one could employ the whole strength of his voluntary powers; they would work quietly and steadily, and make each other wiser and better. The boy was contented, and looked at Eric as if he would, with his eyes, draw him into his soul, and make him his own. Then he lightly touched Eric's shoulder, as if to be newly assured that he was really with him.

Now they put things in order, and Roland was glad to render all kinds of assistance. In spite of his former deliberation, Eric had entered upon the new relation so unexpectedly, and plunged into it so suddenly, that he had hardly settled upon anything. Then there was so much to be discussed with his mother, deciding what he would take with him, and what he would leave behind, that they postponed all to a future arrangement by letter.

When temporary order was established, Eric complied with Roland's request to go with him upon the platform of the tower. They sat down here, and looked about, for a long time, in every direction. Eric could not restrain himself from telling the boy how new and beautiful all life appeared to him. They had formerly built castles upon

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the heights, for strife, for feuds, and for robbery of travellers upon the highway; but we, we work with the powers of nature, we endeavor to gain wealth, and then we withdraw, and place our dwelling upon an elevated site, in some lovely valley, and desire to take in only the eternal beauty, which no one can take away. The great river becomes a highway, along which industrious and noble men erect their habitations. The generations after us will be obliged to say that, at this time, men began to pay loyal homage to nature, as had never before been paid in the history of humanity; this is a new religion, even if it has no outward form, and shall never acquire any.

"Go on speaking, go on, on further," said Roland, nestling up to Eric; he could not say that he would like to hear just the sound of his voice; he closed his eyes and cried again: "Go on speaking!"

Eric understood the imploring call, and went on to relate, how, when he stood for the first time upon the Righi, looking at the setting sun, he had been impressed with the thought whether there might not be some form, some service, by which the devotional feelings of these assembled spectators, in this temple of nature, might find expression. He had learned that this was impossible, and perhaps was not needful: nature imparts to each one a joy of his own, and joy in nature to each a private feeling of devotion, in which no others can share. Then extolling the happiness of being able thus in one's own house, on a tower erected by one's self, to appropriate the world, and the beauty of the earth, he showed how wealth, its pursuit, and its possession might be the basis of a grand moral and social benefit. Riches, he explained, were only a result of freedom, of the unfettered employment of activities, and must have only freedom as their resultant product.

Roland was happy; he did not comprehend the whole, but he felt, for the first time, that wealth was neither to be despised nor to be gloried in. All his teachers, hitherto, had endeavored to impress upon him either the one view or the other.

Joseph came to the tower, and asked whether Eric and Roland wished to dine together in their room; he was answered in the affirmative. They were happy, sitting together, and Roland cried:—

"We two dwell upon an island; and if I ever live in the castle, you must also live with me. Do you know what one thing more I want?"

"How! you want one thing more?"

"Yes; Manna ought to be with us. Don't you think she is now thinking of us?"

"Probably not of me."

"Yes, indeed! I have written to her about you, and this evening I am going to write again, and tell her everything."

Eric was puzzled, for a moment: he did not know what he ought to do. Ought he to restrain the boy from writing about him? There was no reason for doing so, and he would not disturb Roland's impartial candor.

CHAPTER II.

A SPIRIT'S VOICE BY NIGHT.

Roland was writing in his room, and, as he wrote, frequently uttering the words aloud to himself. Eric sat silent, looking at the lamp. What was the use now of wishing? He stood in front of the unpacked books; there were but few. During the last fifteen minutes before going to the train, he had gone once more into his father's study, and locked up the papers left by him; glancing his eye around the library, he took down a book, the first volume of Sparks's handsome edition of the works of Benjamin Franklin. This volume contained the autobiography and the continuation of the life. Some leaves were inserted in the handwriting of his father.

And now he read, on this the first night of his new occupation, these words, —

"Look at this! Here is a real man, the genius of sound understanding and of steadfast will. Electricity is always here in the atmosphere, but does not concentrate itself and become visible lightning.

"This is genius. Genius is nothing but electricity collected in the atmosphere of the soul.

"With this book a man would not be alone, if he were alone on an island; he would be in the midst of the world.

"No philosopher, no poet, no statesman, no artisan, no member of the learned professions, and yet all of these combined in one; a pet son, with Nature for his mother and Experience for his nurse; an outcast son, who, without scientific guidance, finds by himself all medicinal herbs in the wild woods.

"If I had a youth to educate, not for any special calling, but that he might become a genuine man and a good citizen, I would place my hands upon his head and say, 'My son, become like Benjamin Franklin — no, — not this; develop thine own being, as Benjamin Franklin developed his.'"

Eric rested his chin upon his hand, and gazed out into the darkness of the night.

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What is that? Are there miracles in our life? He looked to the right and to the left, as if he must have heard the voice of his father; as if he had not written, but was speaking the words, — My son, become like Benjamin Franklin!

Eric, with great effort, continued his reading: —

"It is indeed well for us to form ourselves after the first men of the old world, the period of generative, elementary existence; the characters of the Bible and of Homer are not the creations of a single, highly endowed mind, but they are the embodiments of the primitive, national spirit in distinct forms, and embrace a far wider compass than the span of individual existence.

"Understand me well. I say, I know in modern history no other man, according to whose method of living and thinking a man of our day can form himself, except Benjamin Franklin.

"Why not Washington, who was so great and pure?

"Washington was a soldier and a statesman, but he was not an original discoverer of the world within himself, and an unfolder of that world from his own inner being. He exerted influence by ruling and guiding others; Franklin, by ruling and guiding himself.

"When the time shall ever come, and it will come, that battles shall be spoken of as in this day we speak of cannibals; when honorable, industrious, humane labors shall constitute the history of humanity, then Franklin will be acknowledged.

"I would not willingly fall into that sanctimonious tone, the remnant of pulpit oratory, that comes out in us whenever we approach the eternal sanctities; and I hope our tone must be wholly different from that of those who claim to speak in the name of a spirit which they themselves do not possess.

"God manifested himself to Moses, Jesus, Mohammed in the solitude of the desert; to Spinoza in the solitude of the study; to Franklin in the solitude of the sea." (This last clause was stricken out, and then again inserted.) "Franklin is the man of sober understanding, who knows nothing of enthusiasm.

"The world would not have much beauty if all human beings were like Franklin; his nature is wholly destitute of the romantic element, (to be expressed differently," was written in the margin, and attention called to it by a cross,) "but the world would have uprightness, truthfulness, industriousness, and helpfulness. Now they use the word love, and take delight in their beautiful sentiments; but you are permitted to speak about love when you have satisfied those four requirements." (This last sentence was underlined with red ink.)

"In Franklin there is something of Socrates, and there is specially noticeable a happy vein of humor; Franklin enjoys also a good laugh.

"Franklin is, through and through, good prose, intelligible, transparent, compact.

"We do not have to educate geniuses in the world. Every genius trains himself, and can have no other trainer. In the world we have to form substantial, energetic members of the common weal. What thou dost specially, whether thou makest shoe-pegs or marble statues, is not my business but thine.

"We shall never be in a right position in regard to the world, if we do not believe in purity, in the noblest motives; the inmost of humanity is revealed to us only on this condition. There is no better coat-of-mail against assaults, than faith in the good which others do, and which one is to do himself; one hears then, within, the inspiring tones of martial music, and marches with light and free step onward through the contest of life.

"It is the distinguishing and favorable feature in Franklin's life, that he is the self-made man; he is self-taught, and has discovered by himself the forces of nature and the treasures of science; he is the representative of those, who, transplanted from Europe to America and in danger of deterioration and decay, attained a wholly new development.

"If we could have, like antiquity, a mythological embodiment of that world which is called America, which carried with it the gods of Europe, — I mean those historical ideas which the colonists carried over with them, and yet freely adopted into their own organic life, — would you have these ideas embodied in a human form, — here stands Benjamin Franklin. He was wise, and no one taught him; he was religious, and had no church; he was a lover of men, and yet knew very well how bad they were.

"He not only knew how to draw the lightning from the clouds, but also the stormy elements of passion from the tempers of men; he has laid hold of those prudential maxims which are a security against destruction, and which fit one for self-guidance.

"The reason why I should take him for a master and a guide in the education of a human being, is this: — he represents the simple, healthy, human understanding, the firmly established and the safe; not the erratic spirit of genius, but those virtues of

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head and of heart which steadily and quietly promote man's social happiness and his moral well-being.

"Luther was the conqueror of the middle ages; Franklin is the first in modern times to make himself. The modern man is no longer a martyr; Luther was none, and Franklin still less. No martyrdom.

"Franklin has introduced into the world no new maxim, but he has expressed with simplicity those which an honest man can find in himself.

"In what Franklin is, and in what he imparts, there is nothing peculiar, nothing exciting, nothing surprising, nothing mysterious, nothing brilliant nor dazzling; it is the water of life, the water which all creatures stand in need of." (Here it was written on the margin, — Deep springs are yet to be bored for, and to be found here). "The man of the past eighteenth century had no idea of the people, could have none, for it was wrung and refined out of the free thinking that prevailed even to the very end of the century, even to the revolution.

"He who creates anew stands in a strange and hostile, or, at least, independent attitude towards that which already exists.

"Franklin is the son of this age; he recognizes only the in-born worth of man, not the inherited. (Deeper boring is yet to be done here)."

With paler ink, evidently later, it was written, —

"It is not by chance, that this first not only free-thinking, — for many philosophers were this, — but also free-acting man was a printer.

"In the sphere of books lies not the heroism, — I believe that the period of heroic development is past, — but the manhood of the new age.

"Because our influence is exerted through books, there can be no longer any grand, personal manifestation of power." (Here were two interrogation-points and two exclamation-points in brackets, and there was written in pencil across this last remark, — "This can be better said.")

Then at the conclusion there was written in blue ink, —

"Abstract rules can form no character, no human being, and can create no work of art. The living man, and the concrete work of art contain all rules, as language contains all grammar, and these are the good and the beautiful.

"He who knows the real men who have preceded him, so that they live again in him, enters into their circle; he sets his foot upon the holy ground of existence, he is consecrated through the predecessors who trode it before him."

And again, in a trembling hand, there was written, at a late period, clear across the previous writing: —

"Whoever takes a part in the up-building of the State and the community, whoever fills an office and makes laws, whoever stands in the midst of the science of his time, becomes antiquated in the course of the new civilization that succeeds him; he is not, by virtue of his position, an archetypal pattern of the coming age. He only is so, who discerns, clears up, lays hold of and establishes anew, those eternal laws of the human spirit, which are the same from the beginning and throughout all time; therefore Franklin is not a pattern, but rather a method."

And now, finally, came the words, which were twice underlined: —

"My last maxim is this: — 'Organic life, abstract laws!' We can make brandy out of grain, but not grain out of brandy. He who understands that, has all that I have to say."

Eric had read so far, and now he leaned back, and endeavored to form an idea of his father's thought, and to catch the whole meaning of these often half-expressed utterances.

He felt as if he were walking upon a mountain-top in the midst of clouds, and yet seeing the path and the goal.

He placed his hand upon the manuscript leaves, and a happy smile came over his countenance; then he arose, and almost laughed aloud, for the expression of the architect, on his arrival, occurred to him.

"We have it!"

"Yes," he cried, "I have it, I have the spring, from which clear, sparkling water shall flow forth for Roland and for me."

He found no rest; he opened the window, and looked out for a long time on the night. The air was full of the fragrance of roses, the sky full of the glory of stars; occasionally a nightingale sang, and then ceased, while in the distance, where the river was dammed up, the frogs kept up a noisy croaking.

Now Eric heard a man's voice — it is the voice of Pranken below on the balcony — which was saying in a loud tone, —

"We attach much, too much importance to it. Such a family-tutor ought properly to wear a livery; that would be the best."

"You are very merry to-day," replied Sonnenkamp.

"On the contrary, very serious; the sacred order of things, without which neither

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society nor the state can exist, has a sure support in the differences of rank being maintained, if each one shows his particular class. Service — "

Eric closed the window softly; he deemed it unworthy to listen.

The nightingales sang outside in the thicket, and the frogs croaked in the swamp.

"Each sings in its own way," said Eric to himself, as he thought of the cheering words of his father, and the expression of the young baron.

CHAPTER III.

THE OLD UNDER A NEW FACE.

On the morning, Roland wanted to ride before doing any thing else; but Eric, whose maxim was that the day could be consecrated only by taking some good influence into the soul, made him read aloud the first chapter of Benjamin Franklin's autobiography. This was the dedicatory act of their new occupation, and when they were called to breakfast, both were very animated. They could take an equal satisfaction with Fräulein Perini, who returned from mass with Herr von Pranken.

Eric had not mistaken, Pranken was there. He greeted Eric with a sort of studied respectfulness, but he fulfilled, after his way, the demands of sincerity; whilst he, as a man who has nothing to conceal, openly acknowledged that he had frequently thought it would be better that Eric should not enter upon the position, with great decision, and in a tone of satisfaction, he added to this, that there were mysterious presentiments in the soul, which we must humbly acknowledge; and so this self-willed act of Roland's was the finger of fate, which laid upon Eric, as upon all the others, the duty of compliance.

Eric looked at Pranken in utter amazement. He had mistaken this man; Pranken brought forward principles of conduct which he should never have supposed, nor would now have attributed to him.

The breakfast passed off cheerfully; the amusement was at the Major's expense, more indeed while absent, than while present. He had naturally narrated to Pranken the terrors of the extra train, and Pranken knew how to tell the story again very much to their entertainment; he could imitate the Major's thick way of talking, and Fräulein Milch was always spoken of as Fräulein Milch with the black eyes and the white cap.

After breakfast, Eric requested Herr Sonnenkamp that he and Roland might, for the future, be excused from this breakfasting in common, and might be left alone together until dinner-time.

Sonnenkamp looked at him with surprise. Eric explained that he asked this on the first day, in order that there might be no precedent of custom established. It was thoroughly needful to keep Roland undisturbed, and in a persistent determination; this could only be done by leaving to them at least half of the day, and the freshness of the morning. Sonnenkamp agreed to it, shrugging his shoulders.

At breakfast it had been casually mentioned that Bella and Clodwig would dine with them to-day.

Eric saw at once the chief difficulty of his calling, which lay in the liability of diversions becoming interruptions. He drew a line of demarkation between himself and all the household, especially Sonnenkamp, which was not expressly defined, but yet could not be overstepped; and this was so much the more difficult, as Eric was not taciturn, and readily entered into the discussion of all matters. But what was this line? There was a something in him which said to each one that he must not ask more than Eric was ready, on his part, to answer. He labored with Roland, and found out where the boy was well-grounded in knowledge, where there was only a partial deficiency, and where there was total ignorance.

A carriage drove into the court. Roland looked towards Eric. He did not appear to have heard the rattling wheels.

"Your friends have arrived," said Roland. He avoided saying that he himself was very impatient to greet Clodwig and Bella, and, under the form of a reprimand, to receive praise for executing the bold deed. But Eric insisted that they had no friends except duty; that there was nothing and nobody there for them until they had performed their duty.

Roland clasped his hands tightly together under the table, and compelled himself to be quiet.

Suddenly, in the midst of a mathematical axiom, he said, —

"Excuse me, they have fastened Griffin by a chain, I know it by his bark; they must not do it: it spoils him."

"Let Griffin and everything else alone; all must wait," Eric said, maintaining his stand.

Roland pranced like a horse who feels the rein and spurs of the rider.

Soon, however, Eric went with Roland down into the court. Roland was right; Griffin was chained. He loosed him, and

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both boy and dog seemed unchained, madly sporting together.

Bella was with Frau Ceres.

A servant informed Eric that Count Clodwig was expecting him. Clodwig came to meet Eric with great cordiality, greeted him as a neighbor, and rejoiced that the boy had exhibited so much energy.

"If we were living in the ancient times," he added, "the boy would have received a new name from this exploit." What Clodwig said of Roland was, at the same time, noble in sentiment and good in the manner of expression.

When they were at the dinner-table, Eric heard in what way Bella jested with Roland; the boy was beaming with delight, for Bella told him of the hero, Roland.

Eric was greeted in a friendly but measured way, by Bella; she called him repeatedly, "Herr Neighbor," and was extremely unconstrained. It could seem to her now as a laughable piece of prudery and timidity, that she had endeavored at one time to exert an influence to remove Eric from the vicinity. Had then the man made an unusual impression upon her? It appeared to her now like a dream, like a mistake.

Eric had thought of this first meeting with a sort of anxiety; now he chided also his vanity.

"Shall you have the library of your father brought here?" asked Clodwig.

Eric replied affirmatively, and Bella stared at him. He knew now why Bella had been so indifferent and unconcerned; he had received money from her husband, and he now ranked, therefore, very differently in her estimation.

At dinner he saw Frau Ceres again, for the first time; and when he went to her, she said in a very low tone, "I thank you," but nothing further; the words were very significant.

They were in good spirits at table. They bought that the journey would be a benefit to Frau Ceres. It would be a suitable preparation for the journey to the baths. One and another day was named for setting out.

Eric did not know what this meant; Roland saw his inquiring look, and said to he in a low tone,—

'We are all going to see Manna, and bring her back to journey with us to the baths. This will be jolly and fine."

Eric experienced anew that the chief difficulty of a life so abounding in means and so unconfined by regular duties was, that every one in the family, and the boy especially, was living either in the reaction from some dissipating amusement, or in the expectation of engaging in it. He would wait quietly, until the question was asked him, in order then to make his resolute decision of some account.

After dinner it happened, as if by chance, that Bella walked with Eric. She first told him how happy Clodwig was that Eric was to remain now in his neighborhood, and then suddenly standing still, and with a furtively watchful look, she said, —

"You will shortly see Fräulein Sonnenkamp again."

"I?"

"Yes. You journey with us, do you not?"

"No one has so informed me."

Bella smiled.

"But surely you will be glad to see Fräulein Sonnenkamp again?"

"I did not know that it was she when I met her."

Bella smiled again, and said, —

"I have seen enough of the world to have no prejudice. The daughter of the house and my brother Otto — Ah, you know well enough what I wish to say."

"No, gracious lady, you give me credit for too much wisdom."

"It should offend me if you are reserved towards me, and are on such intimate terms with the outside acquaintances of the family. The Major's housekeeper boasts of your being her favorite, and yet do you know nothing of the private betrothal?"

"Not until this moment. I offer my congratulations, and I am proud, gracious lady, that you initiate me with such confidingness into your family affairs."

"Do you know," cried Bella quickly, "do you know that I promise myself a great deal of pleasure from you?"

"From me? What can I do?"

"That is not my meaning, to speak in direct terms. I have thought a great deal about you. You are of an impulsive disposition, but you are still an enigma to me, and I hope that I also am to you."

"I had not allowed myself, indeed—"

"I allow you to allow yourself. Then, Herr Captain, or Herr Doctor, or Herr Dournay, but, at any rate, Herr Neighbor, we will make a contract. I shall try to resolve for myself the contradictions and oddities of your nature, and make such investigations as I am able to; on the other hand, I allow you to do the same with me. Do you not find this attractive?"

"Attractive and dangerous."

Bella straightened herself up, and Eric continued: —

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"Dangerous for me, for you know what friend Hamlet says, that if our deserts are known, 'who can escape a whipping?'"

"I am glad that you are not polite, but neither should you be diffident."

"I mean, that it might be dangerous for me, not for you."

"I am too proud to sell, or to throw away politeness, as the Austrian proverb says."

"I am glad that you are too proud for it too."

"And now tell me in what way you saw Manna, and how she appeared to you."

Eric narrated the casual meeting, and how he had first learned her name through the daughter of the Justice.

"Ah, indeed, indeed, Lina," said Bella, and her fingers moved very rapidly, as if she were playing a piano in the air. It was an agreeable recreation to look upon the playing of this sentimental game, for Lina had a decided penchant for Otto. But the naive Innocence knew very well that Otto had a preference for Manna, and it was not so very bad a plan to introduce to Manna so handsome a suitor as Eric.

While Bella was walking with Eric, Pranken had taken Roland very confidingly by the hand, and visited with him the stables and the young dogs; then he led him into an unfrequented part of the park, very remote from the road. Their talk was very naturally about Eric, and Roland could not find words to tell how all-wise and all-good he was. Pranken rebuked, with a stern countenance, the application of such words to a human being, and he impressed very strenuously upon him, that he could learn much from the worldly man that would be advantageous to him in the world, but there was a highest which he was not to entrust to him, and wherein he was to be in no way obedient.

And now he spoke of Manna. There was an expression of devotion in his words, as well as in his tone. He took the book, which he always carried over his heart, out of his breast-pocket, and showed Roland the exact place which Manna reads to-day; by running away, Roland had let several days slip without reading the same passages, but he could now catch up by diligence. But, more than all, Herr Dournay need know nothing of it, for no one of a different faith should step between Roland and his God.

Pranken seated himself with Roland under a great nut-tree, by the road, and read aloud some expressive passages. The boy looked at him in wonderment. The Wine-chevalier rode by; he called out a greeting to Pranken, but the latter returned it with only a friendly wave of the hand, and continued his reading.

It was like a release to Roland when Bella and Eric came along, engaged in a merry, jesting conversation. He called to them, and shortly after joined Eric; and Bella went by the side of her brother, who twirled his moustaches and surveyed his handsome boots. When Eric and Roland had departed, Pranken straightened himself up, and began to appeal directly to Bella's conscience for coquetting and trifling thus with a young man.

Bella stood still, seemingly at a loss whether to laugh at her brother or sharply reprove him; but she concluded in favor of the former course, and ridiculed the new convert.

"Ah," she cried, "you are very properly afraid that this Herr Dournay will be pleasing to the glorified Manna, and you suppose the same in regard to me. You have just hit it. The man has something bewitching for us women, provided we are shut up in the bonds of wedlock, or in a convent."

Pranken did not fall in with this tone; he repeated, that every jest, every act of trifling, bordered upon a sin, and jesting was liable to remove imperceptibly the boundary line. He was so zealous, that he took the book out of his breast-pocket, and read aloud to Bella a passage having reference to the subject.

Bella looked with astonishment when Otto exhibited so pious a book: she pointed out to her brother, meanwhile, what impregnable virtue was; she made fun of the young man, who had a truly revolting self-confidence. Moreover, Otto could be wholly at rest, if there was the appearance of an understanding between her and Eric; yes, she would willingly make, so far, a sacrifice for him; her virtue would be secure from every misconstruction, and she would assume this appearance, in order to free Otto from a dangerous rival.

"I am, indeed, in earnest," she concluded. "Are the good to deny to themselves a friendly intercourse, because the bad conceal under this appearance all kinds of baseness? That would be a world turned upside down; that would be the subjection of the good to the evil."

Bella was not aware, or she did not think it worth while to take note of it, that she here set forth a remark of her husband. Pranken looked at her with surprise. Was he, in fact, misled by his newly awakened zeal, or was this only a nicely-woven veil, a mere outside show of virtue? He was in

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perplexity; he was at a loss what to say in reply to this jesting and playful tone, to these insinuous and flexible evasions of his sister.

CHAPTER IV.

A FRUSTRATED PLAN.

Eric found great difficulty in keeping his pupil steadily at his lessons, so completely was he taken up with the thought of the journey.

The day came for the journey to the convent; it was a bright day of sunshine.

Eric requested that he might remain behind; Sonnenkamp immediately agreed, adding kindly that it would probably be agreeable to Eric to have a few quiet days alone. This considerateness appeared very friendly to Eric, who returned it by saying that it should be his endeavor not to estrange Roland from his family.

Pranken drove over with his sister, and Bella told Eric that Clodwig sent a message, begging for his company during their absence. Eric became thus aware, for the first time, that he had never been expected to join the party; he immediately stifled the sensitive feelings arising from this, as well as from some other occurrences. Roland alone urged him pressingly to go with them, saying, unreservedly, —

"Manna will be very much vexed if you do not come; she ought to see you too."

Sonnenkamp smiled oddly at this entreaty, and Pranken turned away to conceal his features.

Roland took a most affectionate leave of Eric; it was the first time that he was to be parted from him for hours and through the night: he promised, meanwhile, to tell Manna much about him. Something unusual must have been passing in the boy's mind, for just at the moment of departure, he said to Eric, —

"You and the house, you don't go away from your place."

Eric pressed his hand warmly.

They drove to the steamboat in three carriages. Pranken with Frau Ceres, Sonnenkamp with Fräulein Perini and Bella, and, in the third carriage, Roland and the servants.

They drove a short distance up the river to take the boat, and as they afterwards shot quickly past the Villa, Eric was standing on the beautiful, wooded hill, whence there was a view down the stream, where the mountains seemed to meet to compel the river to spread out into a lake. Roland waved his hat from the boat, and Eric answered the greeting in the same way, saying to himself, —

"Farewell, boy dear to my heart."

Whoever understands the meaning of the fact that Eric could not send a greeting into the distance, where it was inaudible, without speaking an earnest word of love, — whoever understands this, has the key to the depths of Eric's character.

The boat puffed by, the waves in its wake plashed for a while against the shore, and tossed the pretty pleasure-boat up and down, then all was still again. The steamboat shot down the stream, and the party on board was very cheerful. Pranken occupied himself with special attentions to Frau Ceres, who, wrapped in fine shawls, sat on the deck.

Roland had received permission to take Griffin with him. All on board were struck by the handsome boy, and many expressed their admiration aloud.

For a short distance the Wine-count and his son, the Wine-chevalier, travelled with them. The old gentleman, a tall, distinguished-looking man, wore his red ribbon in his button-hole; the young man was very much pleased to meet Pranken there, and especially happy to be able to salute Frau Bella.

Towards Sonnenkamp and his family both these old inhabitants had hitherto borne themselves with some reserve; to-day they seemed to wish to change this reserve for a more friendly manner, but Sonnenkamp held back, not choosing that they should make advances to him now that they saw him in a position of honor; and he was evidently relieved when they left the steamer, at the second stopping-place, where there was a large Water-cure establishment. On the landing stood the steward of the prince's household with his invalid son, waiting for the two gentlemen. Bella received a most respectful bow from his Excellency, and she told Herr Sonnenkamp, as they went on their way, that it was almost a settled matter, that the daughter of the rich wine-merchant was to marry the invalid son of the steward.

The day was bright and clear; hardly a breath of wind blew upon the swiftly-moving boat. Roland frequently overheard some one whispering half aloud to some passenger, newly come on board, "There is the rich American, who is worth ten millions."

A special table was laid on deck for Sonnenkamp's party, and Joseph had it ornamented with flowers and brightly-polished wine-coolers. Sonnenkamp's servants, in their coffee-colored livery, waited on them.

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At table Roland asked, —

"Father, is it true, that you are worth ten millions?"

"People have not yet counted my money," replied Sonnenkamp, smiling; "at all events you will have enough to allow you to order such a dinner as we have to-day."

The boy did not seem satisfied with this answer, and Sonnenkamp added, —

"My son, one is rich only by comparison."

"Mark the words, rich only by comparison," repeated Pranken; "that's a fine expression; it includes a whole balance-sheet."

Sonnenkamp smiled; he was always pleased when any one dwelt on an expression of his with special emphasis.

"Ah, travelling is so pleasant, so jolly, if we only had Eric with us!" cried Roland.

No one answered. The boy seemed unusually talkative, for as the champagne was opened, and Bella proposed Manna's health, he said to Pranken, —

"You ought to marry Manna."

The ladies gave an odd look at the two men; Roland had given utterance to the wish of all. He became more and more the central object of the conversation and the jesting, and more and more talkative and extravagant; he uttered the wildest nonsense, and at last complied with Pranken's request that he would imitate the candidate Knopf. He smoothed his hair back, took snuff from his left hand, which he held like a snuff-box, and constantly tapped; he suddenly assumed a perfectly strange voice and expression, as, in a stiff, wooden manner, he declaimed the fourth conjugation, and the precepts of Pythagoras, with a mixture of all sorts of other things.

"Now can you mimic Herr Dournay?" asked Pranken.

Roland was struck dumb. A stony look came into his face, as if he had seen some monster; then he grew suddenly calm, and looked at Pranken as if he would annihilate him, saying, —

"I will never again imitate Candidate Knopf, that I vow from this day forth."

The boy, who was excited by wine and by talking, became suddenly quiet, and disappeared, so that the servants had to be sent in search of him. He was found on the forward deck with his dog, great tears in his eyes; he allowed himself to be led back to his friends without opposition, but he continued silent.

The steamboat glided on and on; the vineyards glowed in the midday sunshine, and soon it was said, —

"Only two more stops, then comes the convent."

Roland went back to his dog, and said, —

"Griffin, now we are going to Manna; aren't you glad?"

It was still high noon when they landed by the weeping-willows on the shore, and entered the refreshing shade of the park which surrounded the convent. The servants were left in a large inn on the other bank of the river.

No one was on the shore awaiting the travellers, although their coming had been announced beforehand.

"Manna not here?" asked Sonnenkamp as he sprang ashore, and the fierce look, which he generally knew how to conceal, came into his face.

Frau Ceres only turned her head towards him, and he became gentle and mild.

"I only hope the good child is not sick," he added, in a tone which would have suited a hermit doing penance.

They went to the convent, whose doors were closed; the church alone was open, and a nun, with veiled face, was prostrate in prayer, while the bright sunshine sparkled out of doors. The visitors, who had crossed the threshold, drew quietly back; they rang at the convent door, and the portress opened it. Herr Sonnenkamp inquired whether Fräulein Hermanna Sonnenkamp were well; the portress answered in the affirmative, and added, that if they were her parents, the Superior begged them to come to her in the parlor. Sonnenkamp asked Bella, Pranken, and Fräulein Perini to wait in the garden; he wished Roland to stay with them, but the boy said, —

"No, I'm going with you."

His mother took his hand and spoke for the first time.

"Very well, you can stay with me."

Griffin remained outside. Roland and his parents were shown into the presence of the Superior, who received them with a very friendly and dignified bearing. She asked a sister who was with her to leave them alone, and then requested the visitors to be seated. It was cool and pleasant in the large room, where hung pictures of saints painted on a gold background.

"What is the matter with our daughter?" asked Sonnenkamp at last, breathing deeply.

"Your child, whom we may call our child also, — for we love her no less than you do, — is quite well; she is generally yielding and patient too, but sometimes she shows an incomprehensible self-will, amounting almost to stubbornness."

A rapid flash from Sonnenkamp's eyes fell upon his wife, who looked at him and

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moved her upper lip very slightly. The Superior did not notice this, for while she spoke she either closed her eyes or kept them cast down; she quietly continued, —

"Our dear Manna refuses to see her parents, unless they will promise beforehand that she may remain with us at the convent through the winter; she says that she does not yet feel herself strong enough to enter the world."

"And you have granted her this condition?" asked Sonnenkamp, as he ran his hand through his white neck-handkerchief, and loosened it.

"We have nothing to grant to her; you are her parents, and have unconditional power over your child."

"Of course," burst out Sonnenkamp, "of course, if her thoughts are influenced — but I beg your pardon, I interrupted you."

"By no means, I have finished; you have to decide whether you will agree to the condition beforehand; you have full parental power. I will call one of the sisters to conduct you to Manna's cell; it is not locked. I have only performed the child's commission, now act according to your own judgment."

"Yes, that I will do, and she shall not stay here an hour longer!"

"If her mother has any voice in the matter," began Frau Ceres.

Sonnenkamp looked at her as if some speechless piece of furniture had spoken, and Frau Ceres continued, not to him, but to the Superior, —

"I declare as her mother that we will lay no compulsion upon her; I grant her this condition."

Sonnenkamp started up and clutched the back of a chair; there was a violent struggle within him, but suddenly he said, in a most gentle tone, —

"Roland, go now to Herr von Pranken."

Roland was forced to leave the convent, his heart beating fast. There was his sister in a room above; what was to happen to her? Why could he not go to her, embrace and kiss her, and play with her long dark hair as he used to do? He went out of doors, but not to Pranken; he entered the open church, and there he knelt and prayed with deep fervor. He could not have said for what he prayed, but he asked for peace and beauty, and suddenly, as he looked up, he started back; there was the great picture of St. Anthony of Padua, and, wonderful to say, this picture resembled Eric, — the noble, beautiful face was Eric's.

The boy gazed long at it; at last he laid his head on his hands, and — blessed power of youth! — he fell asleep.

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CHAPTER V.

SECRET, SILENT LOVE.

The parents entered Manna's cell. Manna calmly met them, and said, —

"Welcome, and may God's blessing be with you!" She extended her hand to her father; her hand thrilled as she felt the ring on her father's thumb. Then she threw herself upon her mother's breast and kissed her.

"Forgive me," she cried, "forgive me! Do not think me heartless; I must do so — no, I will to do so. I thank you, that you have granted my request."

"Yes, indeed, we put no constraint upon you," said the mother; and Sonnenkamp, who had not yet assented, was obliged to comply with her wishes.

Manna's countenance became suddenly lighted up; she said that she was glad to see her parents looking so well, and that she prayed for them daily, and that heaven would hearken to her prayer. Manna had a tone of voice in which one seemed to feel the repressed tears; this voice appeared to affect Sonnenkamp, so that he placed his hand upon his heart, and his posture and look were as if he were making a silent vow.

When Manna asked after Roland, he said, with the mien of one speaking to a person who has been ill and is just convalescent, that Roland was in the park, and Manna must go with them, and greet the ladies and Herr von Pranken.

When her father mentioned this name, a slight shudder went over Manna, but she said with immediate composure, —

"I will see no one but you and Roland."

A lay-sister was sent for Roland. Meanwhile, Manna explained, that, according to the regulations, she must return for a year to the world, and then — she hesitated a moment, and ended with the words — if her present resolution continued, she would take the veil.

"And will you never tell me, why and how this thought has sprung up in you?" asked Sonnenkamp in a supplicating tone.

"Indeed I will, father, when it is all over."

"I don't comprehend! I don't comprehend it!" cried Sonnenkamp aloud. Manna hushed the loud tone of her father with her hand, signifying to him that here in the convent no one spoke so loud.

Roland, after whom they had been looking for a long time, was terrified and shrank back, when, awakened suddenly by a form clothed in black, he found himself in the church. He was conducted to Manna. He embraced his sister heartily, crying out, — "You good, bad sister!"

He could say no more, from the impetuosity of his feelings.

"Not so violent," said the maiden, soothingly. "Indeed! what a strong lad you have got to be!"

"And you so tall! And you look like him, but Eric is handsomer than you are. Yes, laugh if you will! Isn't it so, mother? Isn't it, father? Ah, how glad he will be when you return home, and how much you will like him too!"

Roland talked sometimes of St. Anthony, sometimes of Eric, mingling them together, and telling what an excellent man he had for a teacher and friend; and when Manna said that she should not go home until spring, Roland ended by saying, —

"You can very well imagine how Herr Eric looks; when you go into the chapel, look at St. Anthony, he looks exactly like him, exactly as good. But he can also be strict; he has been an artillery-officer."

Again the father made the request, and the mother joined in it, that Manna would accompany them in their journey to the baths, after which she would be allowed to come back to the convent.

Manna informed them that she could not interrupt her studies and her retreat.

The strange, thrilling tone of her voice had something saddening in it, and when she now stated how earnestly she hoped to become clear and resolute in her determination to be constant to the religious life, tears came into her mother's eyes. But her father gazed fixedly at her; he hardly saw his child, hardly knew where he was. He heard a voice, which once — it seemed incredible that he was the same person — he had heard many, many years ago; and as he thus gazed, he saw not his child, not the scenes around him, he saw nothing but a neglected little mound of earth in the churchyard of a Polish village. He passed his broad hand over his whole face, and, as if waking up, he looked now at his child, and heard her saying, —

"I shall be constant to the life."

He had heard all that had here transpired, and yet his thought and his internal eye had been fixed upon a far distant scene, scarcely comprehensible. Now he repeated his request that Manna would just go with them into the park, and salute the friends; that she ought not to slight them; but Manna firmly persisted that she could not go.

Manna had requested a sister to send for Heimchen; the child came, and looked wonderingly at the strangers. Manna

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pointed out to the child her parents and her brother. The child, scarcely glancing at the parents, nestled up to Roland, when Manna said, —

"This is my brother I have told you of."

"I like you," said the child, "I like you."

She was as confiding with Roland as if she had always played with him. "And will you be my brother?" asked the child.

Manna delared how happy it made her, to be able to do so much for the child.

Sonnenkamp hummed to himself, —

"Yes, yes, that's the way. I know what you are, a child who takes to a stranger child. But enough!"

He rose hastily.

The parents and Roland left the cell. Manna remained there with Heimchen.

Upon the steps, Sonnenkamp said to his wife, —

"This is your doing! The child is estranged from me; you have turned her heart from me, you have said to her ——"

A strange laugh, a laugh sounding as if it came from some other person, was uttered by Frau Ceres. Roland stared at her; here is something incomprehensible to him.

The parents and the boy rejoined the visitors in the park, and Sonnenkamp informed them very calmly that he had given permission to his daughter, in order not to interrupt and disturb her education by outside impressions, to remain at the convent until Easter. Pranken darted a strange glance at Sonnenkamp, and then expressed his admiration of the imperturbable composure with which Sonnenkamp accomplished everything.

Bella and Fräulein Perini had walked over the island. They did not return for a long time; at last they came from the room of the Superior.

Evening was approaching, and as they embarked on the boat, Roland cried, looking towards the convent, —

"Good-night, Manna."

Manna had heard the good-bye, she had slipped into the park, taken a farewell look at the departing visitors, and then went quietly into the chapel.

As they reached the shore, they heard the choir of girls' voices singing with clear tone at the convent.

"This may sound very fine to him who has no child joining in it," said Sonnenkamp to himself.

In the large inn there was hurrying and commotion, as if a prince had arrived with his suite, for Sonnenkamp was fond of making a display of his wealth. The large garden was festively illuminated, this party of travellers was served with special consideration, and every other arrival, on this evening, hardly received any attention. When all was still, a boat, in which Pranken sat, rowed over to the convent. He landed on the island, and heard the music of a harp from an open window. That came from Manna, he was sure. Soon a light was visible in a cell, here and there, windows were opened, the heads of girls appeared and looked out once more into the night; then the windows were closed, the lights extinguished, and the harp-playing ceased.

Pranken saw the church open, and entering, he knelt down and prayed silently. Then he heard a light step, and a sound, as if some one knelt down before the altar; a thrill passed over him, and yet he did not look up, and if he had, he could not have recognized any thing in the darkness lighted only by the solitary, ever-burning lamp. The form arose, and went towards the open church door. The moon cast a broad beam as far as the middle aisle of the church; now, as the form stood in the doorway, Pranken approached and said, —

"Fräulein Manna, a friend. Fear not, a man, who through you has known salvation, stands before you. I have not come to shake your holy resolve, I have only come to tell you what I have become by your instrumentality. No, I cannot tell you — but you ought to know this, — if you take the veil, then I also will renounce the world; apart from each other, so long as we live on this earth, we will live for heaven. Farewell, a thousand times farewell, thou pure, thou blessed one! farewell!"

The young man and the maiden looked upon each other as if they were no longer living creatures of human passions, as if they were transported above the world. Manna could not utter a single word; she simply dipped her hand into the vessel of holy water, and sprinkled Pranken's face three times.

With hasty step, Pranken went to the shore. Manna stood and laid her hand upon her brow.

Has all this been only a vision of her own fancy?

Then she heard the stroke of oars in the river, and a voice again cried: —

"Thou pure, thou blessed one!"

Then all was still.

On the other side a chain rattled, the boat was drawn up to the shore, and no sound was heard; only the waves of the river, which are not heard by day, rippled and plashed and murmured in the still

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night. Manna thought that she could hear the blood as it flowed through her heart, so full, so oppressed, and yet so blissful.

CHAPTER VI.

A DAY WITHOUT PEN OR TYPE.

Eric stood on the shore gazing after the boat, from which Roland was waving at a distance his white handkerchief. To see a person so attached to us flitting away from us in a vessel, seems as if one should love a bird which soars freely up into the air where it cannot be reached; and yet it is different. Human love connects by invisible ties, and this signalizing from afar is a sign of a thought in common, of communication of feeling and participation of interest, notwithstanding all separation by space.

When the boat had disappeared, and only a light streak of vapor floated along the vine-covered slopes, Eric remained standing upon the hill, and as the faint mists hovered in the air, so hovered in his soul the last words of Roland's farewell,—"You and the house do not move from your place."

What a commotion, what an upheaving and swelling, there is in the soul of youth, until it comes to some expression, like an opening blossom!

But that which is closed and wrapped up in the bud has an equal beauty and depth of sentiment, but it is not manifest to us, and does not breathe upon us with such a fragrant and charming loveliness.

So thought Eric as he looked at an acacia-tree, whose buds were yet unopened, and which had put forth not even a green leaf.

Eric was now alone at the villa. He inhaled the quiet, the peace, and the stillness in full draughts, as if, after long days and nights of travel upon the noisy steam-cars, he should suddenly come into the silent woods; yes, as if he were lying deep down at the bottom of the river, and over him were gently rippling the cooling waves. He did not read, he did not write, he enjoyed only an unfathomable rest.

He did not mean to comply with Clodwig's invitation to visit him, until the next day. Eric was certainly removed from all selfishness, but the freedom of living for a whole day without being called upon to talk, and of being entirely by himself, had a charm for him as if he had now, for the first time, escaped out of the captivity of servitude, and acquired the disposal of himself. The thought came over him at one time, that Clodwig was expecting him; but he said almost aloud, —

"I cannot! — I must not!" He wished to pass a single day without speaking or being spoken to, to be by himself, alone, speechless, solitary, referring to no one, and no one referring to him.

He thought, for one moment, of writing to his mother, but he dismissed the idea. No one was to have anything of him, he would have all of himself. This perpetual obligation to think for others, this striving for them and love to them, seemed to him a painful and keen suffering; there was now, in the depths of his soul, a call for solitude. For a single day only would he be an egoist, live in absolute rest, and let no book, no relation of life, no longing, no endeavor, deprive him of aught of this entire loneliness.

This villa was called Eden, and he would, for one day, be the first man alone in Eden. He looked at a tree and nodded to it. Fixed thus, abiding in himself, like this tree, would he live for just a single day.

He lay down in the park under a spreading beech-tree, and dreamed away the day. There is a low, gladsome rippling of being and of feeling, without definite thought or volition, which is the inmost desire of those harassed with restless thought and anxious care. Eric lay thus, happy in himself, contemplating and breathing alone, so that the step of a gardener upon the grating gravel aroused him as from a dream. The gardener began to rake the path; it was a strangely harsh sound. Eric would have liked to bid him keep still, but he forbore, and said to himself, smiling, —

"Thou art just such a raker of the paths."

He looked into the branches of the trees, and as the gentle breeze moved them to and fro, so he allowed his thoughts to be swayed hither and thither, with no desire, no conscious endeavor,—simply living. All was peaceful and silent within him. How long, ever since its first shooting forth, has such a leaf been moved by the wind the whole summer long, until it drops, and then — well, then?

A smile passed over his countenance. We are no longer alone, because there is a second self, and one is conscious of his own unconsciousness. And the thought proceeded farther. Yes, solitude, this is the rest upon the mother-earth, this is the story of Antæus, who is inspired with fresh strength from the ever-present energies of mother-earth, as soon as he touches her. We are raised from the ground by

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our constant thinking, and so are rendered powerless. And farther yet went his dreaming and meditation. This is one trouble of wealth, this is its curse, that it does not enter into the heavens, cannot again be immersed in the primitive might of earthly being, for wealth possesses everything except this, a deliverance from the world, a being alone with one's self. Ballast! ballast! too much ballast!

The doctor's word came into his mind, and the word ballast again and again recurred to his thoughts, just as the finch in the tree over his head continually repeated the same notes.

In the midst of this dreaming and unlimited contemplation he fell asleep, and when he waked up, he was invigorated and full of a fresh life; for the first time, since a long period, he felt at home within himself. He smiled, for a new thought occurred to him, and, as it were, shone through him. Adam slept in Paradise, and when he waked, he saw his wife by his side; a world is his, and also another who is to become one with him.

It was one of those days and hours in which all the past and the present, all that humanity has ever dreamed and ever obtained for itself by toil, bright with a reflected glory, and gleaming in its own splendor, stands before the eyes. All riddles seem solved. All is peaceful, harmonious, and divine.

So must it be to the thoughtful man when he awakens from the sleep of death, and the eternal life opens to his view.

But the struggle must be entered upon anew, in order to maintain the battle of life.

Eric went into the park and around the house, and took in all with newly opened eyes; he had forgotten how all looked, it had been put far away, and now he surveyed everything like a man newly awakened and endowed with fresh strength.

It is well that the world abides, and is always ready in its place when we return to it again from the sphere of unconscious forgetfulness.

A whole day passed, in which Eric read nothing and wrote nothing.

The next morning, ordering his horse to be saddled, he mounted and rode towards Clodwig's house.

He had scarcely been riding fifteen minutes, when a boy called to him, and brought him a letter. He read it, nodded, and rode in good spirits to the village.

CHAPTER VII.

OUR FRIEND KNOPF.

On the bright summer days people sail joyously up and down the river, everything sparkles and glitters in the sunlight, and is full of gladness. Who there thinks how much sorrow, how much weariness, anguish, and care, dwell within the houses they pass by? Look yonder at the high-perched village, that seems to rise so prettily out of the river, and sends to us now the sound of bells; there goes a poor village schoolmaster, with depressed countenance, from the church to the school-house. But to-day his face is lighted up, for a faithful friend stands in front of the school-house, and extends to him his hand.

"Hey! you here, Herr Knopf?" cried the schoolmaster.

"The free Republic of the United States gives me a day's freedom. You see before you an independent man. Ah, dear Fassbender, I am specially born to be a teacher of girls; I tell you that previous to the deluge of their first ball, girls are the choicest blossoms of our planet."

Knopf related to his fellow-teacher how happy he was to have for a pupil a bright American girl, quick of apprehension; and his homely countenance, as he spoke, assumed a wholly different expression.

Knopf had, in fact, an ugly face, it was so full of seams. His nose, mouth, brow, even his eyebrows, which projected somewhat over his light-blue eyes whenever he wore no spectacles, as was now the case, all seemed kneaded out of dough. But now, as he spoke of his pupil, his countenance was lighted up.

He made known that he had come hither, in order to give Roland's present instructor some hints concerning the character of his pupil, and the manner in which he could best be advanced. He had already been walking since before sunrise, and it was a refreshing walk. He felt now that it was not needful for him to go to the villa, he would make an appointment with the tutor to meet him here, and requested that a boy might carry a note from him to Captain Dournay.

The children came up one after another, and saluted Herr Knopf, whom they already knew. A curly-headed boy was very happy to be the bearer of the note to Villa Eden, instead of being obliged to sit in school.

Knopf knew a beautiful spot back of the village, under a linden on the crown of the hill, where there was a wide prospect on every side. Strolling thither, he laid him-

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self down under the tree, and surveyed the landscape with a joyful glance.

"In grass and flowers I love to lie,
And hear afar the flute's sweet sigh,"

he said almost aloud to himself. And since in our steam-puffing times there is no flute to be heard, Knopf screwed his cane, which was intended also for a flute, into the right shape, and played upon it the tune set by Conrad Kreuzer to Uhland's song. He was more pleased at the thought that others would hear this at a distance, than that he was hearing it himself.

No boat went up or down the stream that he did not signalize it with a white handkerchief. What matter if those on board were strangers? He has given them a sign that he on the height here is happy; they below there are to be happy too. The signal may tell them that.

Yes, Knopf deserves to be known more intimately.

The son of a poor schoolmaster, Knopf had gone through his university course with great difficulty, and had passed his examination; but now he fell into great misfortune. On the very first day of his year of probation, the boys stamped and hissed, and the more he bade them be quiet, so much the more noisy were they; and the more enraged he became, so much the more insolent was their derision. The director came to his assistance, but as soon as he went away from the schoolroom, the noise and stamping began afresh. It was granted to Knopf to pass his year of probation in a distant city; but some invisible sprite must have spread abroad his mishap, for very soon after he began teaching, the same thing happened here. And now he gave up entirely the office of a public school teacher.

Knopf was abundantly liked at the capital as a teacher of girls. Inasmuch as he was so fabulously ugly, mothers could entrust their half-grown daughters to his private instruction, without the least anxiety lest they should fall in love with him. He was conscientious and painstaking, but he did not succeed. He was liked in all the families, but no one wished to employ him exclusively, or for any considerable length of time; he was only a temporary teacher. No other one had so many deceased scholars as he, for many were committed to his instruction only after they became ailing.

Knopf had been much at the watering-places, and when the parents could not go with their children to the baths, he was entrusted with that service; he was both tutor and attendant. He was also teacher for some time in an asylum for idiots, and his conscience often reproved him, then and afterwards, for not remaining in that position; but he asserted that he was too much a devotee of the beautiful.

Yes, he wanted to explore what kind of humane institutions were established among the Greeks and Romans. He found that they had very few children morally and physically diseased. Knopf had a plan, which he held on to for some time, of establishing an institution for the care of sick children at some salt-spring; for iodine is the watch-word of the cultivated, that is, the possessing world, whose humours are acrid: he hoped to find an associate for the sacred iodine. Meanwhile he remained a make-shift teacher for girls.

Greek and Roman mythology was his strong point, and it is extremely important that a maiden in cultivated society should make no mistake in that. His favorite pursuit was, however, the interpretation of the poets, especially the romantic. Of course, he was himself a poet, but modestly, only to himself. There were probably in the capital few albums, begun by very young girls and afterwards abandoned, which did not contain a sonnet, or oftener a triolet, beautifully written by Emil Knopf for his dear pupil. He had also a musical knowledge sufficient to direct the private practising of pupils, and he was particularly strict, yes, even unmerciful, in keeping time. He could also draw sufficiently well to give assistance in that respect, especially in drawing flowers. He was also handy and popular in wedding-games, whenever one of his pupils was married. He not only knew how to make the maidens speak in the language of flowers, as "I am the rose," "I am the violet," but he could bring out jokes and sportive allusions; and while the players in their fine dresses were declaiming, and forming charming tableaux, he sat in the prompter's box, and breathed to them the words. How happy he was, too, at some public dinner, and how assentingly he nodded, when this or the other speaker recited by heart, or read from a manuscript, the toast he had himself composed!

Emil Knopf was one of the most serviceable of men; he was proud of never having advertised in the newspapers; he was recommended from mouth to mouth, and for the most part from one fair mouth to another, one mother speaking in his commendation to another, and the fathers smiling and saying, "Yes, Herr Knopf is a very conscientious teacher."

If he were in a house where smoking was disagreeable, he chewed roasted coffee-

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berries, and he was just as contented with that. Knopf liked to take snuff, but he did it only when he was alone, and very quietly; he carried a colored and a white pocket-handkerchief, so that the gentleman and the lady of the house might not notice that he took snuff. One very peculiar habit he could not break himself of, that of hitching up the trousers on both legs, as if they were going suddenly to drop down from his body.

But this is no sufficient reason for his appearing destined to be only a temporary teacher, nothing but a pedagogical nurse for a few weeks. Knopf is taken into some family until the stress of sickness or need of some kind is over, and then he is dismissed with very courteous, very friendly words; but still always dismissed. Fourteen half-yearly terms — Knopf always reckoned by the semester, and we must do the same by him — Knopf lived at the capital; and, during this period, he always intended to procure a wholesale quantity of a brand of cigars which should taste right, but he never made up his mind. Fourteen semesters he smoked, from week's end to week's end, different kinds of cigars on trial, and was perpetually asking what was the price by the thousand, but he never succeeded in getting the thousand at one time.

Knopf was, naturally, one of the clumsiest of mortals, but he trained himself to be one of the best swimmers and gymnastic performers, so that he was, for a time, assistant teacher of gymnastics. Having been employed twice in the country, where it is so difficult to procure piano-tuners, he had been led to learn how to tune pianos himself; but he would never do it except in the house where he happened to be temporarily living. Several persons asserted that he could also knit and do plain sewing, but this was unmitigated slander. He could darn stockings in a most masterly style, but no one had ever seen him do it, he always did it secretly by himself.

Knopf had come to Herr Sonnenkamp likewise as a temporary candidate and temporary teacher; here a longer tarrying seemed to be allotted to him, and a future free from anxiety. Knopf had an enthusiastic love for Roland, and although the boy learned nothing thoroughly with him, Knopf used to say to his crony, the teacher Fassbender, —

"The Gods never learned anything, they had it all in themselves. Who can tell us the name of Apollo's teacher of music, or with what chief-butler Ganymede served his apprenticeship? Fine natures have all in themselves, and do not require instruction. We are only cripples with all our learning; we are tyrannized over by the four Faculties, but life is no four-sided figure."

This, then, is our friend Knopf; and he was called "our friend Knopf" in the best families of the land.

Knopf had just left off playing the flute, and was now sitting with his writing-tablets upon his knee, looking sometimes round upon the landscape, sometimes writing rapidly a few words; then he would put his pencil in his mouth, and seemed ruminating for some new turn of expression. One could see the road for a great distance, leading from the village, by the villa, to the neighboring hamlet. Now Knopf saw a man on horseback coming towards him. He transformed speedily his flute into a walking-stick again, concealed his tablets, and then hastened across the vineyard down to the highway.

"Yes, he who sits a horse so well, he is just the right teacher for him," said Knopf. He took off his hat; while still at a distance, the rider nodded to him.

CHAPTER VIII.

A WALK IN THE OPEN AIR.

The rider approached, and was soon by the side of Knopf, who, unable to utter a word, looked in surprise at the noble figure. Eric said, however, —

"Have I the honor of seeing my colleague, Herr Knopf?"

"Yes, I am he."

Eric swung himself quickly from the saddle, and held out his hand.

"I thank you," he said; and at every word which he spoke, at every tone of his voice, Knopf's face brightened; more and more knots and seams showed themselves all over it, as Eric continued, —

"It was my intention to visit you very soon; but I did not want to do so, until I had made my own independent observations on all sides."

"Very right," answered Knopf, "every judgment received from others is a prejudice." With constantly increasing admiration, Knopf looked at Eric, saying, — and the words sounded like a confession of love, —

"I am glad that you are really a handsome man. Ah, you may smile and shake your head, but that counts a great deal in this family, and especially with Roland. The Spartans had the wise law, — horrible indeed, but embodying a deep principle — that no deformed child should be allowed to

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live. All men ought properly to be handsome."

Eric placed his hand on Knopf's shoulder, unable to answer a word; admiration and a desire to laugh contended within him, but admiration conquered. A man of such an appearance must have overcome much in himself to be able to express himself in this way. He went with Knopf to the village, telling him that he ought to have come to see him at the villa, and that he would have found him quite alone, if he wished to avoid the family, for they had gone with Herr von Pranken to the convent, to bring Manna home.

"Ah, poor girl!" said Knopf, pityingly. "I can venture to say, that I have already had more than fifty lovely noble maidens as pupils, and not one-half, no, not one-quarter of them have married as I should have wished. Ah, Herr Colleague, you see I have never in my life repeated in one house what happened in another, and you can understand that it has been a difficult duty. Mothers always want to find out what goes on here and there, but I have refrained, on principle, from telling anything. Whoever gossips to me will gossip about me, my mother always said. I have taken heed of that, and so have got on very well."

Eric was delighted with the true-hearted man, and he quickly drove away the thought that Pranken was going to bring the rich bride for himself from the convent. What was the maiden to him?

He left his horse at the village inn, and Knopf conducted him to a spot under the lindens on the hill-top, and there explained his views about Roland.

"I must, like a child," he began, "tell you of my last observation, and my last trouble. You are not in a hurry? I must honestly confess to you, that nothing in our time vexes me so much, as to find people always in a hurry."

Eric set his mind at rest, by telling him that he had the whole day at his disposal, concluding, —

"Now, go on."

"Then for my last trouble. As I walked hither over the mountain, past the forest-chapel yonder, all was fresh with dew, the birds were singing undisturbed, heedless of the ringing of the matin bell in the chapel above, and of the railroad bell below. What did self-sufficing nature, in this season of early spring love, care for these sounds? But that isn't exactly what I meant to say to you," he interrupted himself, placing his hand upon his tablets, which undoubtedly contained a poem in this strain. "Only this — as I was walking along the wood-path, I heard children's voices, clear and merry, and a mild and gentle one seemed to have control over them. There came up the mountain a beautiful maiden — no, I beg your pardon, I did not see that she was beautiful till afterwards — I was just taking it comfortably, and had removed my spectacles in the green forest; now I put them on again, and saw first some beautiful, plump, white hands. The girl saw me, and I don't know what she may have thought, but she seemed frightened, and took the hand of her oldest brother, a boy of thirteen; two younger boys were following her. I passed them with a greeting; the maiden made only a slight acknowledgment, but the boys said "good-morning," aloud. We went our different ways, and I looked long after them.

"I turned back to the chapel. The quiet and order reigning there, where no human beings dwell, everything ready for their devotion, those holy vessels, the pictures, the candles, and the good priest. I don't believe a man who so bows down, kneels, and raises his hands in prayer, can be wholly a hypocrite; the lowest criminal in the jail would be an angel compared with him. The sermon itself was only a milk-and-water affair. But would you believe it? my real reason for going back had been a wish to see the maiden again, but I felt ashamed of having entered the church from such a motive, and I slipped out on tip-toe. And then all personal feeling dropped from me, and the great trouble came over me."

"What do you mean?"

"The trouble caused by our freedom oppressed me. The girl, hardly out of school, walks, in the fresh morning, through the mountain wood with her three young brothers, and they wander to the forest chapel, whence the bell calls to them. Think, if these four young creatures had had no such goal for their morning walk, none so safe and beautiful, what would it have been? a walk in the open air, nothing more! In the open air — what is that? It is nothing and nowhere. But to enter a firmly founded temple, where the organ is sounding, and holy hymns are sung, this must give fresh life to the youthful souls, and they bring home from their morning walk, leading through the open air, to a fixed goal, a wholly different refreshment for their spirits. And up there a divine service goes on, whether men come to it or not; nothing depends on the special character of a congregation, nor on the particular degree of culture of a particular man. It holds its course, uncaring whether it is received or not, like eternal nature; whoever comes may take part in

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it; no one asks, no one need know, whence he comes. If I could be a believer, I would be a Catholic, or a Jew of the old faith. But what is our life? a walk in the open air, without limit, but also without a destination! You see that I cannot but be sad, for I cannot compel myself to anything different, to anything positive. And as it is with me, so is it with this age, and yet we must regain something different; our life ought not be be simply a walk in the open air, but through the open air to a firm, safe, home-like destination about which human spirits may gather. Oh, if I could only define it, seize upon it, and the millions of thirsting, pining human souls with me! And do you know," Knopf concluded, "then I thought of you and Roland? Do you now understand me?"

"Not perfectly."

"Ah, I have been too vague again. Plainly, then, this has been and is now my thought, — whither can you lead Roland? Into the open air. But what is he to do there? What will he find? What will he have? What will restrain or draw him onward? That is the point, there lies the hard riddle. The religion, the moral fortress, whither we have to lead the rich youth, has no walls, no roof; it has no image, no music, no consecrated form of words — there's the trouble! Do I make it clear to you?"

"Yes, yes, I understand you perfectly," said Eric, seizing the hand of his companion. "You express my very deepest thoughts; I hope, though, that it may be granted us to give a human being something that he may hold to within himself, without leaning on any outside support. Have not we two, who now stand here, this inward hold?"

"I believe so, or rather, I am sure of it. I thank you, you make me quite content," cried Knopf, with animation. "Ah, world! here we sit, and look off into the distance, watching for some sign, some word, which may penetrate and renew all our being; it comes not from without, it comes only from within ourselves. And in Roland there lies a complete human being, a genuine, primitive nature, in spite of all that has been done to smother it; he has bold presumption and wonderful tenderness, at the same time. He has many fine feelings, but youth cannot explain its feelings; if it could, it would be no longer youth. All sorts of elements exist in Roland, but we grown people cannot understand a child's heart. Let us ask ourselves whether, in our childhood, our best friends understood us as we really were. You will accomplish this, you are called to it."

"I?"

"Yes, it is so. A great, inscrutable plan guides all existence and binds it together. A wonderful law in the world, which some men call Providence, others fate, decrees that a man like you must be led in far-off paths, through various callings, and armed for his work, till he stands ready in his noble beauty. Ah, do not shake your head, let me go on; it is a holy thought, that a mysterious power, which we must name God, has led you hither to train a beautiful human being, an Apollo-like creature, who is to have nothing to do in the world but to be noble and to feel nobly. I did not rightly manage Roland; I sowed before I knew whether the soil was prepared. To-day, as I saw a man raking in the vineyards, I thought, there is Copernicus."

"Copernicus?" asked Eric, in perplexity.

"Understand me aright; the first man who dug up the ground with pointed stick, horn, bone, or stone, in order to plant seeds, he moved the earth, he was the father of our culture, as Copernicus at last discovered that the whole planet is in motion."

"What do you think, then, is now to be made of Roland?" said Eric, bringing him back to the subject.

"What is to be made of him? A noble man. Is it not a mistaken course to drive a human being to goodness, by the sight of all sorts of misery and weakness? That makes him morbid, sentimental, and weak. The Greeks had a different method, that of energy, cheerfulness, self-reliance, — that makes him strong. Our virtue is no longer 'virtus,' but only a feminine hospital-work. Ah," continued Knopf, "the genuinely noble man, or the genuine man, is the unexamined man, a species no longer to be found in Europe. We are all born to be examined. That was the greatness of the Greek, that they had no examination commissions. Plato took no degree, and do you know, that is the greatness which is bringing forward a new Greece in America, that *there* also, properly speaking, there are no examinations."

"Don't wander so far," interposed Eric.

"Yes," Knopf went on unheeding, "Roland is the unexamined human being; he need learn nothing in order to be questioned about it. Why must every modern man become something special? '*Civis Romanus sum*,' that ought to be sufficient."

Again Eric drew him back from his digression, asking, —

"Can you suggest any vocation for Roland?"

"Vocation! vocation! The best that

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can be learned is not found in any plan of study, and costs no school-fees. The division of callings, on which we so much pride ourselves, is nothing but a Philistine tyranny, a compulsory virtue. Common natures return payment by what they do, noble ones by what they are. Thus it is, if a noble being exists, and freely acts out his nature, he adorns humanity and benefits it. I have tried to guard in Roland a simple unconsciousness of wealth; we are not placed here merely to train ourselves to be brothers of mercy. Not every one need serve; to perfect one's self is a noble calling. I respect Cicero's maxim: 'He who does nothing is the free man.' The free man is the idler."

Eric disputed this, and Knopf was no little surprised, that Eric had the exact passage from Cicero in his memory, and could prove that Cicero only made the assertion that no man was free who was not sometimes idle: *non aliquando nihil agit*. He said besides that the statement of the German poet, that there could be a noble life without activity, without labor, was still more an error. He tried, however, to put an end to these general considerations. What effect could their thoughts and discussions, as they sat there on the hill-side, bring about concerning the vocation of humanity?

Knopf remarked assentingly that he had wandered too far, and said, —

"You ought to take Roland away from here."

"It would certainly be best, but you must know that it cannot be brought about."

"Yes, yes. I have tormented myself much with the idea whether there is any possibility of making Roland imagine himself poor, but, if a negation is logically susceptible of the comparative degree, that is still more impossible. I have read Jean Jacques Rousseau's *Emile*, and have found much that is good in it; I have also studied the treatise on Riches which is ascribed to Plato; and in Aristophanes there is to be found deep insight into poverty and wealth. If you will sometime come to Mattenheim, I will show them all to you."

Eric made some slight inquiries as to the causes which had removed Knopf from the family, but Knopf did not tell him; he only gave him to understand that Roland had been led astray by the French valet Armand, who had since been dismissed from the house. With unusual haste, he then left the subject, and said that he had hesitated about coming to Eric, but Herr Weidmann had read the wish in his face, and had encouraged him in it.

Eric promised soon to go to Mattenheim. Knopf was very happy to hear of Roland's industry and obedience, and Eric told him how from the life of Franklin he was giving him not only a personal ideal, but also taking occasion to lead him, as they studied Franklin's course of education, to perceive, acknowledge, and supply his own deficiencies.

"Do you know," exclaimed Knopf, springing up, "what can make one happier than those great words of Archimedes, — I have found it! Still more blessed are the words, *Thou* hast found it! Yes, you have found it!" he cried, drawing up his trousers; he would have liked to embrace Eric, but he did not venture.

And when Eric told him that he had been drawn to this most simple method by some notes of his father's, Knopf exclaimed, looking up into the free air, —

"Blessings on thy father! Blessings on thee, eternal Spirit! O world, how great and noble thou art! Now we know what one becomes, when one walks in the open air; one grows into a free man, a Benjamin Franklin. Here are two people on a hill-top by the Rhine, and they send a greeting to thee in eternity. Ah, pardon me!" said he, "I am not generally like this, you may depend upon it. But, Herr Captain, if you ever desire anything great and difficult of me, remind me of this hour, and you shall see what I can do."

Eric changed the subject by asking Knopf to tell him about his present pupils.

"Yes," said Knopf, "there it is again. Her parents have sent the child to Germany, because there was danger that yonder, in the land of freedom, her spirit would be fettered, for Dr. Fritz and his wife hold liberal opinions in religion, and are patterns of nobility of mind. The child was in an English school, and after the first half year, she began to wish to convert her parents, and constantly declared her determination to become a Presbyterian. She wept and prayed, and said she could find no repose because her parents were so godless. Is not this a most noteworthy phenomenon? Now her parents have sent the child to Germany, and certainly to the best home that could be found."

Knopf took a letter from his pocket; it was from Dr. Fritz, who, as a representative of German manhood and philanthropy, was busily working in the New World for the eradication of that shame which still rests on the human race in the continuance

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of slavery. Dr. Fritz gave the teacher an exact sketch of his little girl's character, which showed great impartiality in a father. He also pointed out how the child ought to be guided. In the letter there was a photograph of Dr. Fritz, a substantial-looking man, with a full beard, and light, crispy curling hair; something of youthful, even ideal aspiration spoke in the expression of the strong and manly face.

With an air of mystery Knopf then confided to Eric, that the child had lived in the New World within the magic circle of Grimm's tales, and it was strange — he could not find out whether it was pure fancy or fact — but the child had had an adventure on her journey that seemed to belong to a fairy tale.

"Her name is Lilian," said Knopf, "and you know that in English our mayflower is called the lily of the valley, and the child received a mayflower from some being in the wood who did not know her name. A wonderful story she has woven together in her little blond head, for she constantly insists that she has seen the wood-prince."

"You are secretly a poet," said Eric.

Involuntarily Knopf's hand went to his breast-pocket, where his tablets lay hidden, as if he suspected that Eric had stolen them from him.

"I allow myself now and then to string a verse together; but don't be frightened, I've never troubled any one else with them."

Eric felt cordially attracted towards this man, so dry in outward apearance, and yet so deeply enthusiastic; and as the bells rang again in the village, he said, —

"Now come and make me acquainted with the schoolmaster."

CHAPTER IX.

ANTHONY.

The schoolmaster of the village was stiff and formal in manner; he received the Captain very humbly. The three were soon seated together at the inn, and the village teacher related the history of his life.

He was sixty-four years old, but seemed still very vigorous. He had the same reason for complaining which all public teachers have, and related with a mingled pride and bitterness that his son, twenty-one years of age, was receiving more than twice the pay in a cement-factory of the young Herr Weidmann, than his father was receiving after a service of two and thirty years. He had four sons, but not one should become a schoolmaster. Another son was a merchant, and the oldest a building-contractor in America.

"Yes," cried he, "we schoolmasters are no better off than any common day-laborer."

"Would you remain a schoolmaster," asked Eric, "if you had a competency?"

"No."

"And you would never have become one?"

"I think not."

"This is the deplorable part of it," cried Knopf, "that riches always say, and say rightly, I ought not to remove all need, for through this the beautiful and noble build themselves up; need calls into being the ideal, the virtuous. See here, Herr Captain Colleague, Herr Sonnenkamp, who is a good deal of a man, of wide observation, says, —

"'I must not trouble myself concerning the people about me, neither must Roland, for if he did, he would lose all comfort of his life; he would never be able to ride out, without thinking of the misery and suffering he witnessed in this place and in that.' See, here is our riddle. How can one at the same time be a person of elevated thought, and be rich? We teachers are the guardians of the ideal. Look at the villages all around; there is in them all a visible and an invisible tower, and the invisible is the ideality of the schoolmaster sitting there with his children. I honor you, because you also have become a schoolmaster."

Eric looked up in a sort of surprise, for his vanity was inwardly wounded at being reckoned a schoolmaster, but he quickly overcame it, and was happy in the thought.

He prevailed upon the village schoolmaster to go on with the history of his life. He was a good mathematician, had been employed in the land-registry and in the custom-house; he lost his situation when the Zollverein was established; for two years he looked round for something to do, almost in a starving condition, and then became a schoolmaster. He had married well, that is, into a wealthy family, so that he was able to give his sons a good education.

Evening had come on. Eric promised the village schoolmaster to give him something to do with the instruction of Roland.

Knopf accompanied Eric for some distance, and then requested him to mount his horse.

Knopf stood looking after Eric for a long time, until he was hidden by a bend of the mountain, and his puffed lips addressed words in a low tone to him, after he had disappeared.

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On the way home, Eric was surprised that he thought less about Roland, than he did about Manna, who was to arrive this evening.

Laughable old stories, how the tutor fell in love with the daughter of the house, and was expelled by the hard-hearted, rich father, and here he stands before the house all lighted up, he hears music; above, the lovely one celebrates her marriage with a very noble coxcomb, and a pistol-shot — no; it would be more practical to find some better situation.

Eric had humor enough to dismiss every such fancy; he would remain distant, composed, and respectful towards the daughter of the house.

When he rode up to the villa, the carriages had already arrived, and Eric received from Herr Sonnenkamp a reproof for his want of friendliness in not remaining at home, or taking note of the hour of their arrival.

After the conversation that he had had with Knopf, the feeling of being in service seemed to him now very strange; or was this reception intended to give him a hint of how he was to conduct himself towards Manna?

Eric made no reply to the reprimand, for such it was. He came to Roland, who warmly embraced him and cried, —

"Ah! with you only is it well, all the rest are —"

"Say nothing about the rest," interrupted Eric.

But he could not restrain Roland from relating the disappointment of all, that Manna did not return with them.

Eric breathed more freely.

Roland mixed up in his relation an account of Bella's getting out at the water-cure establishment on their return, because a message from Count Clodwig had informed her that he would meet her there. Finally he said, —

"What does all the rest amount to? You are there in the convent, and I have told Manna that you look just like the Saint Anthony in the church of the convent. Yes, laugh, if you please! If he should laugh, he would laugh just like you; he looked just as you look now. Manna told me the story. The saint has been praying to heaven, and the Christ-child has laid himself there in his arms, when he was all alone, and he looks at him so lovingly, so devoutly."

Eric was thrilled; a pure living being has also been given into his hands. Is he worthy to receive it, and can his look rest purely upon it?

They sat together without speaking, and Roland, at last, cried, —

"We will not leave each other again, ever. To-day when I sat there upon the deck, all alone, it seemed to me — I was not asleep, I was wide awake — it seemed that you came, and took me in your arms and held me."

Roland's face glowed; he was feverishly excited, and Eric had great difficulty in calming him down. But what he could not easily do was easy for the dogs; Roland became the self-forgetting child again, when he was with the dogs, who had grown so astonishingly in a few days.

Pranken also came in a very friendly way to Eric, and said that he admired his stimulating power, for Roland had exhibited during their absence a susceptibility of mind and a sensitiveness of feeling, which no one would have supposed him capable of.

Now say what you please, candid reader! Yesterday, an hour ago, you held in little esteem some man's judgment, you saw distinctly his limitations, and now he shows that he recognizes your worth, he praises you, he extols you, and suddenly, without being aware of it, your opinion is changed concerning him whom you before regarded as one-sided and contracted, especially if you are a person struggling with yourself, withdrawn into yourself, and often self-doubting.

This was the case with Eric. Pranken seemed to him a man of very good judgment, very amiable indeed; and he even expressed openly his satisfaction, that the friends of the family stood by him and cheered him in his difficult work of education.

Pranken was content; Eric manifestly acknowledged his position; he showed this by not accompanying them on the journey, and not thrusting himself into the family; perhaps also there was a certain touch of pride in not wanting to appear as a part of the retinue; at any rate, Eric did not seem destitute of tact.

Pranken understood how to make this patronizing protection appear as a sort of friendly confidence.

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CHAPTER X.

ENTICEMENTS ABROAD.

Eric and Roland lived together in the castle, for so the rooms in the turret were called, as if they had taken possession of a new abode, and were all alone; no sound from the human world penetrated here, nothing but the song of birds, and the ringing of the bells of the village church on the mountain.

A regular employment of the time was instituted; until noon they knew nothing of what was going on in the house, and Roland lived almost exclusively in the thought of Benjamin Franklin.

New analogies were continually presenting themselves, and it was especially productive of them that an American youth, a rich youth besides, who had never been deprived of anything, should lay out for himself a life full of deprivations. Roland lived and moved wholly in Franklin; he spoke, at the table, of Benjamin Franklin, as if he were a man who had just appeared, and was invisibly present and speaking with them. Roland wished to keep a regular record of what he thought and did, exactly as Franklin had done, but Eric restrained him, knowing that he would not persevere in it, being as yet too fickle. And this calling one's self to account was peculiarly adapted to one who stood alone, or was seeking the way by himself. But Roland was with Eric from morning till night. They repeated Franklin's physical experiments, they entered into his various little narratives, and Roland would often ask on some occurrence: —

"What would Franklin say to that?" Eric had been in doubt whether he should say anything to Roland of the interview with Herr Knopf. He was waiting for a more suitable time; he felt that the fixed order of Roland's method of life should not now be disturbed.

There was a great commotion at the villa, for the entire contents of the hot-house were brought out into the park, and a new garden was made in the garden. Roland and Eric did not see it until everything was arranged.

Pranken made a brief visit almost every day, and when he remained to dinner, he spoke a great deal of the princes of the church; he always called the bishop the church-prince. A second court-life seemed to have been opened to him, and this court had a consecrating element, was self-ordering, and needed no Court-marshals.

Herr Sonnenkamp enquired with much interest about all the arrangements at the Episcopal court; but Frau Ceres was wholly indifferent, for she had discovered that there was no court ball given, and no ladies were visible, except some very worthy and respectable nuns. Frau Ceres entertained a great dislike to all nuns, principally because they had such great feet, and wore such clumsy shoes and cotton gloves. Frau Ceres hated cotton gloves; and whenever she thought of them, she affirmed that she experienced a nervous *shiver*.

The days were still; the trees from the South grew green and fragrant, with those that were native to the soil; but the quiet days came to an end, for they were packing up and making other preparations in the house. Lootz was the director, and huge trunks had already been sent off.

It was a rainy morning: Eric and Roland were sitting together with Franklin's life again before them. Eric perceived that Roland was inattentive, for he often looked towards the door.

At last there was a knock, and Sonnenkamp, who had never before disturbed their morning's occupation, now entered the room. He expressed his satisfaction that the course of instruction had been so regularly arranged, and he hoped that it would suffer only a temporary derangement from the journey, as they could immediately resume it on arriving at Vichy.

Eric asked in amazement what this reference to Vichy meant, and was told that the family, with the whole corps of servants, male and female, as well as Roland and Eric, were going to the mineral baths of Vichy, and from there to the sea-baths at Biarritz.

Eric composed himself with great effort; the struggle had come sooner than he anticipated, and he said that he did not know what Roland thought about it, but that, for his own part, he had made up his mind, that he could not take the journey to the Baths.

"You cannot go with us? Why not?"

"It is unpleasant to me to make this declaration in Roland's presence, but I think that he is sufficiently mature to comprehend this matter. I think, I am firmly convinced, that a serious course of study cannot be resumed at a fashionable watering-place, and then continued at Biarritz. I cannot begin the instruction after my pupil has been hearing, in the morning, all kinds of music at the fountains. No human being can be confined there to earnest and fixed thought. As I said, I consider Roland mature enough to decide for himself. I will remain here at the villa, if you desire it, until your return."

Sonnenkamp looked at Eric in astonish-

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ment, and Roland, supplicatingly. Sonnenkamp did not appear to rely upon his self-command sufficiently to meet the family tutor in the requisite manner, and he therefore said in a careless tone that the matter could be discussed in the evening. In a half-contemptuous manner, he begged pardon for not having informed Eric of his plans for the summer at the University-town.

Eric now sat alone with Roland, who, in silence, looked down at the floor. Eric let him alone for awhile, saying to himself, Now is the critical time, now is the trial to be made.

"Do you understand the reasons," he at length asked, "why I cannot and will not continue our life of study, this life that we pursue together, in a place of amusement?"

"I do not understand them," said the boy, perversely.

"Shall I explain them?"

"It is not necessary," replied the boy, sullenly.

Eric said nothing, and the silence enabled the boy to realize how he was behaving; but there was something in the soul of the youth that rebelled against anything like subjection. Taking up a different topic, Roland asked: —

"Have I not been diligent and obedient?"

"As it is proper that you should be."

"Do I not deserve now some amusement?"

"No. The performance of duty is not paid for, and certainly not by amusement."

Again there was a long silence, the boy turning up and down the corners of the biography of Franklin, which he had just been reading. Without saying anything, Eric took the book out of his hand and laid it down. With his hand upon the cover, he asked, —

"What do you think that Franklin would now say to you?"

"I can't tell what he would say."

"You can, but you do not choose to."

"No, I cannot," said the boy. He stamped insolently with his foot, and his voice was choked with tears.

"I have a better opinion of you than you have of yourself," said Eric, taking hold of the boy's chin. "Look at me, don't look down to the earth, don't be out of humor."

Roland's countenance was unmoved, and the tears stood motionless in his eyes. Eric continued, —

"Is there any good thing in the world that I would not like to give you?"

"No; but——"

"Well, but what? Go on."

"Ah, I don't know any. And yet—yet—do go for my sake, go with us; I could not take pleasure if you were not with us—I there, and you here alone."

"Would you like to journey then without me?"

"I will not do it, you are to go too!" said the boy, springing up and throwing himself upon Eric's neck.

"I declare to you most decidedly, I do not go with you."

Roland let his hands fall, when Eric grasped them, saying, —

"I could also say in my turn, Do stay here for my sake; but I will not. Look up brightly, and think how it would be if we remain together here. Your parents travel to the Baths; we stay here and learn something regularly, and are happier than we should be on the promenade, with the music of the saloon, happier than by the sea-shore. See, Roland, I have never been to France, nor seen the sea. I renounce the pleasure, I prefer the duty; and do you know where my duty lies?"

"Ah, the duty can go with us wherever we go," cried the boy, smiling amidst his tears. Eric was obliged to laugh too; at last he said, —

"This duty cannot travel abroad. You have had distractions enough all your life. Come, be my dear comrade, my good fellow. Have confidence in me, that I can see reasons which you cannot."

"Yes, I do have confidence, but it is so splendid, you can't imagine it, and I will show everything to you."

A whirlwind seemed to have seized Roland, so that he turned round and round. It came over him with a rush, that he had forced Eric to remain with him, that he had forced his father to give Eric to him, and now he was about to desert him! But there was the enticement of the music, the pleasant journeys, the protecting ladies, and the roguish girls who played with him. Suddenly he cried, —"Eric! thy mother!" for she had said to him on taking leave, Be so worthy, that Eric will never leave you! This thought was now aroused within him, and on the other hand, there were the carriages driving, and the merry troop riding on horseback, and he among them. How could this old, grave lady, clad in mourning, who stood in the path, detain him? It was like a feverish waking dream.

"Eric! thy mother!" cried he again, and then he said, embracing him, —

"Eric! I remain with you! now help me, so that they shall not take me away without you."

"You are not to be obstinate with your parents, but you have now also a duty to

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me; you must not leave me, as I must not leave you."

It was a hard struggle to gain the consent of the parents to Roland's remaining at the villa with Eric. Frau Ceres was brought over the soonest, but Sonnenkamp held out, and Roland looked on in perplexity. The desire arose in him that his father would withhold his consent, and Eric be prevailed on to go with them.

Eric took the father aside, and told him that he considered it would be the ruin of Roland, if now when he had voluntarily pledged himself, and was constrained to do what was best, the whole should be upset; the youth had never, on account of various distractions, come to any knowledge of himself. He declared that, grievous as it would be to him, he should be obliged to leave the family, if Roland went with them. He had not said this to Roland, for Roland should not be permitted to think upon the possibility of the tie being severed. He besought Sonnenkamp to employ now a little policy; it would not be wrong. He was to say to Roland, that he wanted to test his constancy, and he was glad that he had stood the trial; that he had hoped Roland would make the proposal to stay with Eric, and he gave his consent.

Inwardly chafing, Sonnenkamp complied with this proposition, and Roland saw himself released on the one side, and bound on the other.

On the next day, the parents set out on the journey.

Eric and Roland drove with them to the railroad station, and when the approaching train was signalized to be near, Sonnenkamp took his son aside, and said to him, —

"My boy, if it is too hard for you, jump into the car, and leave the Doctor to himself. Believe me, he won't run away from you; there is a golden whistle by which every one can be called. Be bold, young fellow."

"Father, is this also a part of the test you have put me to?"

"You are a plucky youth," answered Sonnenkamp, with emotion.

The train rumbled in. A great number of black trunks, studded with yellow nails, were put on board, Joseph and Loots showing themselves expert travelling-marshals. Boxes, bags, portmanteaus, bottles, and packages were placed in the first-class car which Sonnenkamp, Frau Ceres and Fräulein Perini occupied. Roland was kissed once more, Sonnenkamp whispering at the same time something in his ear. The train rolled away, and Eric and Roland stood alone on the station-steps.

They went silently back to the villa. Roland looked pale; every drop of blood seemed to have left his face. They reached the villa, where all was so silent and desolate.

After they had got out of the carriage, Roland grasped Eric's hand, saying, —

"Now we two are alone in the world. What can one undertake at such a time?"

The wind roared in gusts through the park, and shook the trees, whose blossoms went whirling into the air, while the river tossed up its waves; a thunder-storm was coming on.

Eric ordered the horses to be put again to the carriage, and entered it with Roland, who asked, —

"Where are we going?"

Eric quieted him with the assurance that he was about to show him a miracle. They drove down the road, where the wind was dashing about the branches of the nut-trees, while the lightning flashed and the thunder rolled overhead.

"Where are we driving?" Roland asked again.

"We are now going to school to Franklin. I can now show you how the lightning is tamed." And they drove on to the railroad station.

The telegraphist gave Eric a very friendly reception. Eric showed his pupil, in the office of the telegraph, the electrical current in a pretty little glass box, where a blue spark darted rapidly hither and thither, and then vanished over the connecting wires. At every flash a sharp click came from the connecting rods, and, at the same instant, the little blue flame appeared and then vanished.

Eric was glad to be able to exhibit this to his pupil, and the telegraphist added many important and interesting details. He related how they were inexpressibly troubled in their communications during a thunder-storm, for incomprehensible words came over the wires, and he was once hurled by a shock of electricity against the stove yonder. He showed the metal plates to draw off the lightning, which often struck and cut off the conducting rods as nicely as if done with a sharp file.

They had removed the lights, and saw only the little blue flame, which Roland watched with childish delight. It was easy to explain the operation of the electro-magnetic telegraph, and Roland said, —

"Even if Franklin was not acquainted with this, he yet first caught the lightning."

"Do you think that he could know what would be the results?"

Eric endeavored to explain to Roland,

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that in all discovery, invention, creation and action, there is a great bond of unity, a continual process of development. And here in this dark room, while the little blue flame was dancing, and the three persons hardly venturing to speak aloud soon became utterly speechless, the soul of the youth was touched with a feeling of devotion, and raised far above the range of ordinary experience. The separation from his parents, the pleasure that had allured him, all had vanished, had sunk out of sight, as if he were living on some star remote from the earth.

The storm had ceased, and a copious rain was falling; when the window was re-opened, Roland said, gently taking Eric's hand, and looking out into the night, —

"Can one not imagine, that the soul in the bodies of human beings moves like the electrical spark on the wire?"

Eric made no reply. He saw that the boy was beginning to see something of the enigma of life; he must work it out for himself, and could not and must not be helped at present. And this trifling question gave assurance that the higher life could be preserved in the youth; he had overcome the desire of dissipation, and had given himself up to what could not be made slavishly subject to his will.

The telegraphist gave an account of Sonnenkamp's frightful appearance and conduct on the night that Roland was missing. He said in a low tone to Eric, that he himself was afraid of the man, and that notwithstanding the considerable sum of money which he offered him to remain there through the night, he had pleaded as an excuse the want of official orders, because he would not remain alone with Sonnenkamp for all the gold in the world..

Eric perceived that Roland had heard the last remark notwithstanding the low tone, and said in a jesting way, that a man who has to deal with the nervous filaments extended over the earth might very readily become nervous himself.

The telegraphist assented, and had many wonderful stories to tell. When Eric went with Roland into the passenger's room, he was surprised to see Roland's quick eye for the laughable characteristics of people. He had observed very shrewdly the peculiarities of the telegraphist, and imitated him very exactly. Without a direct rebuff, Eric endeavored to explain to his pupil, that those persons who are partly engaged in work, and partly in science, in that middle region of the vocations of life, such as apothecaries, surgical operators, lithographists, photographists, and telegraphists, are easily carried from one extreme to the other. Telegraphy created a certain excitability, and susceptibility, on account of the direct arousing of the faculties and the operation at great distances, which give to the soul a certain tension and excitation.

Eric sought to explain all this to his pupil; he would have liked to give him the just views which are embraced in the knowledge of psychological principles, but he led him back to the wonderful in what they had seen, and he succeeded in his purpose of deeply impressing this upon the soul.

The stars were glittering in the heavens, when they returned home from their glance into the mysterious primitive force of earth's being.

Eric could not restrain the impulse to picture to his scholar what had been probably the feelings of that people of the desert, on the evening of that day when Jehovah had revealed himself to them in thunder and lightning upon Mount Sinai; how it must have been with them when they went to rest, and how it must have seemed to the souls of thousands, as if the world were created anew.

Eric hardly knew what he was saying, as he drove through the refreshed and glistening starry night. But the feelings of the boy and the man were devotional. And after they reached home neither wished to speak one word, and they quietly bade each other good-night. But Eric could not go to sleep for a long time. Is the light in the soul of a human being an incomprehensible electric spark that cannot be laid hold of, and which flashes up in resolve and act? So long as there is no storm in the sky we send at will the spark over the extended wire; but when the great, eternally unsubdued, primitive forces of nature manifest themselves, the human message is no longer transmitted, and the sparks spontaneously play upon the conducting wires. Chaos sends forth an unintelligible message.

A time will come when thou shalt no longer be master of the living soul of thy pupil, in which, with all thy heedful precaution, rude, uncontrolled elements are at work. What then?

There is no security given for the whole future, and in the mean time, what concerns us is to fulfil quietly and faithfully the duty of the day.

CHAPTER XI.

THE FRUIT IS SET ON THE GRAPE-VINE.

THERE is stillness in the vineyards on the mountain-side, and no persons are

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among the green rows, for the vines, which until now were allowed free growth, have been tied up so that the blossoms may not flutter about. The hidden blossom makes no show, but a sweet fragrance, just faintly perceptible, is diffused through the air. Now, the vine needs the quiet sunshine by day, and the warm breeze by night; the bloom must be set as fruit, but the flavour, the aroma, and the strength are not brought out until the autumn. After the fruit has become set, storm and tempest may come; the fruit is vigorous, and sure of attaining its future noble destiny.

Roland and Eric went hand in hand over the country, with no definite object in view; the town was quiet, and the scattered country-houses were deserted.

Bella, Clodwig, and Pranken had set out on a journey to Gastein, the Major to Teplitz, the Justice with his wife and daughter to Kissingen. Only the doctor remained at his post, and he is now alone, for his wife has gone to visit her daughter and grandchildren. Eric had determined at the very first, before he knew of the journey to the Baths and of being alone, to decline every distraction and every connection with a wide circle of acquaintance, wishing to devote himself exclusively and entirely, with all his energies, to Roland. And so they were now inseparably together, from early in the morning until bedtime.

He only who lives with nature, day in and day out knows all the changes of light, so various and fleeting, and only he who lives exclusively with one person knows thoroughly the sudden upspringings of thought, when all is illuminated and stands out in prominent relief. Eric was well aware that Roland frequently dwelt upon the pleasures and dissipations of a life at the Baths, and that the youth had often to force himself to a uniform round of duty, struggling and inwardly protesting to some extent against it; but Eric looked upon it as the prancing of an untamed horse, who resists bit and bridle, but soon is proud of his trappings. Numberless elements influence, move, form, and expand whatever is in process of growth; man can bend and direct that which is taking form and shape, but to affect the changes beyond this stage is not in his power.

Eric brought three different influences to bear upon his pupil. They continued to read Franklin's life; Roland was to see a whole man on every side. The political career, which Franklin gradually entered upon, was as yet not within the range of the youth's comprehension; but he was to form some idea of such varied activity, and Eric knew, too, that no one can estimate what may abide as a permanent possession in a young soul, even from what is but partially understood. The White House at Washington took rank in Roland's fancy with the Acropolis at Athens and the Capitol at Rome; he often spoke of his ardent desire to go on a pilgrimage thither.

It was hard to fix the youth's attention upon the establishment of the American Republic and the formation of the Constitution, but he was kept persistently to it.

Eric chose, for its deep insight, Bancroft's History of the United States.

They read, at the same time, the life of Crassus by Plutarch, and also Longfellow's Hiawatha. The impression of this poem was great, almost overlaying all the rest; here the New World has its mythical and its romantic age in the Indian legend, and it seems to be the work not of one man, but of the spirit of a whole people. The planting of corn is represented under a mythological form, as full of life as any which the myth-creating power of antiquity can exhibit.

Hiawatha invents the sail, makes streams navigable, and banishes disease; but Hiawatha's Fast, and the mood of exaltation and self-forgetfulness consequent thereon, made upon Roland the deepest impression.

"Man only is capable of that!" cried Roland.

"Capable of what?" asked Eric.

"Man only can fast, can voluntarily renounce food."

From this mythical world of the past, which must necessarily retire before the bright day in the progress of civilization, they passed again to the study of the first founding of the great American Republic. Franklin again appeared here, and seemed to become the central point for Roland, taking precedence even of Jefferson, who not only proclaimed first the eternal and inalienable rights of man, but made them the very foundation of a nation's life. Roland and Eric saw together how this Crusoe-settlement on a large scale, as Frederic Kapp calls it, unfolded into a high state of culture; and that sad weakness and compromise, which did not immediately abolish slavery, also constituted a knotty point of investigation.

"Do you think the Niggers are human beings like us?" asked Roland.

"Undoubtedly; they have language and the power of thought, just as we have."

"I once heard it said, that they could not learn mathematics," interposed Roland.

"I never heard that before, and probably it is a mistake."

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Eric did not go any farther in this exposition; he wished to cast no imputation upon the father, who had owned large plantations tilled by slaves. It was sufficient that questions were coming up in the boy's mind.

Nothing better could have been contrived for Eric and Roland, than for them to learn something together. The architect, a man skilled in his business, and happy to have so early in life such an excellent commission entrusted to him, was communicative and full of information. The castle had been destroyed, as so many others were, by the barbarous soldiers of Louis XIV. encamped in Germany, exactly a hundred years before the French Revolution. An old main-tower, the so-called Keep, had still some remains of Roman walls, concrete walls, as the architect called them.

"What is concrete?" asked Roland. The architect explained that the inside and outside layers consisted of quarry stone laid in regular masonry, and between, stones of all sizes were thrown in, and then the whole was evidently cemented together with a sort of heated mortar.

Only one-third of the tower had apertures for light; the rest was solid stone wall.

The whole region had made use of the castle as a stone-quarry, and the corners had especially suffered, because they contained the best stones. The whole was grown over with shrubbery, the castle-dwelling had wholly disappeared, and the castle itself, originally Roman, had probably been rebuilt in the style of the tenth century. From a drawing found in the archives only a few additional characteristics could be made out, but from single stones and angles much of the general structure could be copied, and the architect showed how he had planned the whole, and he was particularly glad to have discovered the spring, out of which they had taken, to use his own expression, "a great deal of rubbish and dirt."

The insight into the inner mystery of a man's active calling produced a deep impression upon the youth, and he followed out the whole plan of construction with great diligence; and he and Eric always placed before them, as a reward for actual work accomplished, this instructive conversation with the architect, and even frequently a permission to be actively employed. It was a favorite thought of Roland's to live here at some future time alone at the castle, and he wanted to have had some hand in the building.

Roland and Eric were regularly but no accidently, at the castle when the masons and the laborers engaged in excavation were paid off on Saturday evening. The time for leaving off work being an hour earlier than usual, the barber came from the town and shaved the masons, and then they washed themselves at the fountain; a baker-woman with bread also came out from the town, and the workmen placed themselves, one after another, under the porch of a small house that had been temporarily erected. Roland frequently stood inside the room, with the foremen, and heard only the brief words, —

"You receive so much, and you, so much."

He saw the hard hands which received the pay. Frequently he stood outside among the workmen themselves, or by their side, observing them; and the boys of his own age received his particular notice, and he thanked all heartily, when they saluted him. Most of them had a loaf of bread wrapped up in a cloth under their arm, and they went off to the villages where they lived, often singing until they were out of hearing.

Eric knew that it was not in accordance with Sonnenkamp's ideas for Roland thus to become familiar with different modes of life, for he had once heard him say, —

"He who wishes to build a castle need not know all the carters and quarrymen in the stone-pits around."

But Eric considered it his duty to let Roland have an unprejudiced acquaintance with a mode of life different from his own. He saw the expression of Roland's large eyes while they were sitting upon a projecting point of the castle, where the thyme sent up its sweet odor around them, and they looked out over mountain and valley, with the bells sending out their peal for the Sunday-eve; and he felt happy, for he knew that an eye which so looked upon the hard-working hands, and a thought which so followed the laborers returning to their homes, was forming an internal state that could not be hardheartedly unmindful of one's fellow-men. Thus was a moral and intellectual foundation laid in the soul of the youth. Eric took good heed not to disturb the germinating seed by exposing it to the light.

One evening, when they were sitting upon the castle, the sun had already gone down, and the tops of the mountains only were tinged with the glowing sunset, while the village, with its blue slate-roofs and the evening smoke rising straight in the air, seemed like a dream — Roland said, —

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"I should like to know, how it is that no castles are to be found in America."

Eric repeated with pleasure Goethe's verses, —

"America, to thee is given
A better fate than here is found!
No mouldering castle-towers hast thou,
No monumental columns fallen;
No gloomy shadows of the past,
No vain and useless strife
Beeloud thy heavens serene.
To-day suffices with its good;
And, sing your children in poetic strains,
Be it on higher themes
Than robbers, knights, and haunting ghosts."

Roland learned them by heart, and wanted to know more of Goethe.

In their quiet walks Eric repeated to him many of Goethe's poems, in which not man, but nature herself seems to have produced the expression. The towering spirit of Goethe, with Hiawatha and Crassus, was now added to the sedate and unexciting study of Benjamin Franklin.

Roland felt deeply the influence of the various moral and spiritual elements in whose circle he lived. Eric was able to quote apt passages from the classic poets of antiquity, as well as of his own country to his pupil. This revealed to Roland's perception the double manifestation of all life, and made him long for the real and true.

One day, when Eric and Roland were sitting on the boundary of a field, they saw a hare which ate a little, ran off, and then ate again. Roland said, —

"Timid hare! yes, why shouldn't he be timid? he has no weapons of attack or of defence; he can only run away."

Eric nodded, and the boy went on.

"Why are dogs the enemies of hares?"

"What do you mean?"

"I mean, I can understand how the dog and the fox are enemies; they can both bite: but why a dog should hate and pursue a hare, that can do nothing but run, I can't understand." In spite of all his knowledge, Eric often found himself in a position where nothing but conjecture could help him; he said, —

"I think that the dog in a wild state found his chief food in the defenceless animals, as the fox does. The dog is really a tame cousin of the fox; education has changed him only so far that he now bites hares to death, but does not eat them. Animals that feed on plants live in the open air, but beasts of prey, in caves."

For a short time the boy sat silent, then he suddenly said, —

"How strange!"

"What is it?"

"You will laugh at me, but I have been thinking," — as he spoke a bright smile broke over the boy's face, showing the dimples in his cheeks and chin, — "the wild animals have no regular hours for their meals, they eat all day long; dogs have only been trained by us men to take their food at certain times."

"Certainly," replied Eric; "the regulation of our lives by fixed hours only begins with education."

And without tedious or unnecessary diffuseness, Eric succeeded in bringing before his pupil what a great thing it is to measure time, and to set our daily life to the rhythm of the universe, of the whole starry world.

Improbable as it may seem, it was really the fact, that from the time of this conversation, which began with so small and insignificant a matter, but took so wide a range, the hours of study of the pair were strictly fixed: Roland wished to have no more unoccupied time. This was a great step in his life; what had before seemed like tyranny was now a self-imposed law.

A few weeks later, Roland himself gave up his favorite companions for Eric's sake. On their walks through fields and over mountains, and their visits to the castle, the dogs had been taken as a matter of course. Eric was ready to reply to every question of his pupil, but a disturbing companion was always with them so long as Roland never went out without one of his dogs, and there could be no connected thought while the eye rested on the animal, however involuntarily. The dog constantly looked up at his master and wanted his presence acknowledged, and wandering thoughts followed him as he ran. It was difficult for Eric to bring Roland to leave them at home; he did not directly order him to do it, but he several times replied to his questions, by saying that he could not answer when their attention was given to calling the dogs and watching their gambols. When this had been repeated several times, Roland left the dogs at home, and saw that Eric meant to reward him for his sacrifice by his ready answers to all his questions. Eric led Roland into departments of knowledge, but took care not to impart too much at once; on many points he put him off till a later period, drawing him constantly to follow out the suggestions of his own observations.

Yonder lies the field, and there is the vineyard where the grapes grow, collecting and transmitting within themselves all the elements which float in the air, or repose in the earth; and more than all, the rolling river sends forth into the fruit an immeasur-

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able strength and a mysterious fragrance. The growth goes on by day and night, through sunshine and dewy shade; rain and lightning and hail do their work, and the plants live on to their maturity. Each separate plant is at first hardly to be noticed, but it grows to meet its nature-appointed destiny.

Who can name all the elements which mould and build up a human soul? Who can say how much of what Eric cherished in Roland has grown and thriven up to this very hour? And yet this unbroken growth brings the mysterious result which forms our life.

Roland and Eric were present every morning and evening when the lawns were sprinkled, and when the shrubs and flowers in tubs and pots were watered; they helped in the work, and this endeavor to promote growth seemed to satisfy a thirst in themselves. There was a sense of beneficence in doing something to help the plants which gave beauty and freshness to day and night.

"Tell me," Roland once asked timidly, "why are there thorns on a rose-bush."

"Why?" answered Eric. "Certainly not that we may wound ourselves with them. The butterfly and the bee do not hurt themselves with the thorns of the rose nor with the spines of the thistle; they only draw honey and pollen from the flower-cups. Nature has not adapted herself to the muscular conformation of man, nor indeed to man at all. Everything exists for itself, and for us only so far as we know how to use and enjoy it. But, Roland," he added, as he saw that the boy did not well understand him, "your question is wrongly put. For what purpose? and why? these are questions for ourselves, not for the rose-bush."

The park and garden blossomed and grew, and everything in its place waited quietly for the return of its master; in Roland, too, a garden was planted and carefully tended. And the thought comes, Will the master of this garden, and will his flowers and fruits, bring comfort and refreshment to those who live with him on the earth?

The nightingales in the park had grown silent, the intoxicating sweetness of the blossoms had fled, there was a quiet growth everywhere.

And while the days were full of mental activity, in the quiet nights Roland and Eric walked along the mountain paths, and feasted their eyes on the moonlit landscape, where on one side the mountains threw their shadows, and in sharp contrast the moonlight rested on the vineyards, and the stars shone above and sparkled in the river. An air of blessed peace lay over the landscape, and the wanderers drank it in as they walked on, breaking the silence only by an occasional word. These hours brought the truest benediction; in them the soul wished only to breathe, to gaze, to dream with open eyes, and to be conscious of the inner fulness, and of the onflowing, quiet, prosperous growth of nature. The vine draws nourishment from earth and air, and in such hours all that is developed in the soul by nameless forces ripens there, with all that streams into it from without.

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CHAPTER XII.

A HUNTER'S PLEASURE AND A HUNTER'S PAIN.

Eric took great care not to change Roland's bold and determined character into one of morbid enthusiasm. He interposed between the studies an equal measure of physical exercise, fencing, leaping, riding, swimming, and rowing. He was glad that he had to call in no other teacher, and he gained new strength, and maintained his constant intercourse with his pupil, by taking the lead in these recreations.

With Fassbender's help, he also taught Roland to take measurements out of doors. Fassbender was extremely skilful in such work, but he constantly showed a humble submissiveness towards Roland, which caused Eric much vexation; and when he said one day that he should tell his friend Knopf how industrious and clever Roland was, the boy tossed his head in displeasure. He evidently wished to hear nothing more of Knopf; perhaps, too, he had something in his memory of which he would not speak to Eric.

Eric laid out a shooting-ground for Roland also, not wishing to withdraw him from his accustomed life out of doors, where he had roved at pleasure; only it was distinctly understood that exercise in the open air was to come after mental work, never before it.

One great difficulty lay in moderating Roland's passion for hunting. Eric did not wish to repress it altogether, but only to keep it within due limits. Now, in midsummer, there was only rabbit-hunting, and Claus came to take Roland out with him. Former teachers had left Roland to go alone with the huntsman, but Eric accompanied them, and Roland drew in new life as they went through the vineyards.

Eric's attention was roused at hearing Claus say that Manna had been an extremely bold rider, even as a little child, and afterwards as a growing girl, and that her father had always taken her with him on a hunt, where she showed the wildest spirit. Rose and Thistle were the dogs which had belonged to her, and now whenever they heard her name, they noticed it directly, and looked sharply round as if expecting her.

Eric would have liked to ask how it happened that a bold and spirited girl, who delighted in hunting, could now be living like a penitent in a convent. It was hard to bring this picture of her, hunting with her gun and with her dogs, into harmony with the picture of the winged apparition. But he took care to ask Roland no questions, and behaved to the huntsman as if he had known it all before.

His father had left Roland his favorite dogs, Rose and Thistle; they were small, but powerfully built, with broad chest and strong back, and they appeared to understand when Roland praised them. The smaller, the female, with red chops and many scars on her head, always licked his hand while he extolled her wonderful courage, and hung her head when he said he was sorry that she was not so obedient as the somewhat larger male, Thistle. With sparkling eyes, which seemed to glance with modest pleasure, Thistle looked at Roland when he explained to Eric that the dog would obey only English words, but by their use could be managed perfectly; if he called out to him "*zuruck!*" Thistle looked at him as if deaf; but the moment he said "Come back!" he fell back a foot behind him.

They passed a low oak-tree; Roland seized a branch, and shook it, crying "Hang!" and Thistle sprang up, caught the branch with his sharp teeth, and remained hanging to it till Roland told him to let go. Rose performed the same trick, and even outdid herself, for she whirled round several times as she hung, and then, with a sudden jerk, broke off the branch and brought it to Roland. The boy and the dogs were very happy together, and seemed to understand equally well where they were going.

They went by the huntsman's house, where the two ferrets were put into a basket. On the edge of the wood, Roland took out the pretty little yellow creatures, which moved in a sort of snake-like way, and put muzzles on them, caressing them as he did it. They then went into the thicket, where fresh burrows were soon found; over some of the outlets, nets were spread, and Roland was delighted at the skilful way in which Eric fastened them down with pegs, which he made from twigs cut from the trees. The ferrets were let loose, and very soon a rustling was heard, and some rabbits came into the nets, and were soon bitten and shaken to death by the dogs. The ferrets were sent in again, and the hunters stood before the holes to shoot the rabbits as they came out; Roland missed, but Eric hit his mark.

Eric was far from saying anything to Roland of the cruelty shown, especially in the net-hunting, and the manner in which the dogs bit at the eyes of the poor creatures, and never let go till all struggling ceased; he was enough of a hunter to overlook this.

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Claus knew how to smother pity by inveighing against the confounded rabbits, which gnawed at the young vines and spoiled them and all that was best in the fields; he imitated one of the peasants who always struck at a rabbit with his stick, crying, —

"Have I got you at last, you damned —"

After they had gone farther on, Rose went into a hole, and they heard her barking deep down under ground. She had found a fox. The hunter's excitement awoke in Eric, and they all stood quietly on the watch. Thistle was also sent into the hole, and his bark was heard far below, but the fox did not come out. Soon Rose appeared with her nose torn and bleeding; she looked up at the hunters and went back into the hole; whining and barking were heard, and at last the dogs came back, streaming with blood, but no fox appeared; they waited long, but in vain.

"They have killed him," said the huntsman in triumph; "we shall never get him."

Roland was full of tender compassion for the dogs, but Claus consoled him with the assurance that they would soon get over their hurts. Roland said he could not understand how dogs could bite a fox to death, when a fox had such sharp teeth; the huntsman shrugged his shoulders, but Eric answered: —

"The fox bites sharply, but does not hold on."

Roland looked at Eric in surprise, feeling that he was a man from whom everything could be learned; all Eric's knowledge had hardly made so much impression as this single remark.

Again they sent the ferrets into a fresh burrow; only one came out; they waited long and left the huntsman on the spot, but the second ferret was not to be seen. Roland was inconsolable for the loss of the fine little creature, so bright and tame. When Eric said that the animal would die of hunger in the woods, with its mouth so firmly muzzled, Roland walked on for some time in silence. Suddenly he put his hand into the basket, took out the other ferret and let it loose, then took aim and shot it down; he left the dead creature lying undisturbed in the wood, and walked home with Eric without a word. He looked long at his gun; Eric knew that it would be many days before its report would be heard again, and so it was.

From the time of this last hunt, a coldness and ill-humor, reluctance and listlessness, appeared in Roland; he was not exactly rebellious, but did everything without interest, and often looked strangely at Eric.

Eric did not know what to do; for several days he was much disquieted, feeling that he was no longer a novelty to Roland, and that the sense of satiety which torments the rich, who never can long enjoy the same thing, increased as it was in Roland by his wandering life, was producing apathy and discontent in him; he must be taught to greet with pleasure the day which brought no new thing, but only a repetition of the day before.

The huntsman came to Eric, took him aside, and said: —

"I've found the ferret that ran away from us."

"Where?"

"In the wood yonder, there it lies with its muzzle on, starved to death, and eaten up by the ants."

"We will say nothing of it to Roland."

"Certainly not. Do you know what the ferret's name was?"

"No."

"It was Knopf. He only called it 'master,' because you were present. It always vexed me; Herr Knopf is certainly superstitious, dreadfully superstitious, but one of the best men in the world. Roland has told me in confidence, that, on the journey which he made to force your to come back, a spirit appeared to him in the wood one morning, a fairy-princess, as stupid, superstitious men would say, — a wonderful child with light curling hair, but she spoke English, — only think, spirits speak English too now, — she came to him early in the morning in the forest. That's the sort of stuff Herr Knopf has put into his head. I don't want to say anything against Herr Knopf; he's a good man, he taught poor children for nothing, and did good, much good, but belief in spirits and such nonsense ought to be put an end to. Don't you notice how bad Roland looks now? I think the belief in spirits is to blame for this. Drive it out of his mind right sharply."

Eric doubted whether this was what produced Roland's continued ill-humor, but he was struck by his having told the huntsman something which he had never confided to him. But he would not force his confidence and disturb the boy's mind; he would wait quietly till the cloud passed over.

CHAPTER XIII.

FRESH WINE, FRESH SONG, AND FRESH FAME.

The Doctor had called, in the meanwhile, but only for a brief quarter of an hour at a time; he commended Eric for so taking

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upon himself the entire direction of Roland, and devoting himself to him so exclusively; he desired that no intervention of his should interrupt the inflowing of the moral and spiritual influence.

Eric now detained him, speaking of Roland's paleness, which he thought an indication of sickness.

"Indeed?" cried the Doctor. "Has it taken so soon? I am glad that it has made its appearance on the surface so early and so decidedly."

"What is it? What is it, then?"

"It's all right and normal; symptoms all good. My dear young friend, I call it usually the May-cold. Just consider a moment! Roland was born for a huntsman, and I was afraid you would turn him into a pebble-gatherer or a beetle-sticker. I see very plainly, that you would like to give him a deeper apprehension of life, but there lies the danger that he will take it too seriously; now the best prescription for life is, to take life easily."

Eric chimed in with this, acknowledging that he was far from desiring to make Roland a pattern youth, perfect in every particular. The Doctor continued: —

"As I said before, our lad is troubled with the May-cold. Whenever there is a change in the relations of life, as change of occupation, or marriage, where the previous independence is given up, after the first weeks of bloom, notwithstanding all the happiness enjoyed, comes in the May-cold, just as we see in nature. They say that it comes from the Alps, from the melting of the icebergs there; perhaps icebergs of egotism melt within, and at any rate, it is like a renewed struggle of winter with summer, like a struggle of solitariness with sociality. Don't be despairing! Let the days of chilly convalescence pass over the lad, and all will be well. Don't press him hard in these days; he is already beginning to feel as if he had come under a yoke. Moreover, I will give him some medicine, so that he shall think he is not well; this will be an advantage to him, and to you too, for you can then give way to him, as an invalid is expected to be perverse, and to be humored, as a matter of course."

The Doctor now came more frequently. He proposed to Eric to make a longer visit at Mattenheim, in accordance with Weidmann's invitation, as the contemplation of a life full of a many-sided activity would refresh both teacher and pupil. Eric replied that he did not consider it right to leave, for any length of time, the house that had been entrusted to his care. The Doctor assented, thinking it better that Roland should first become thoroughly familiar with the Rhine-home.

Eric and Roland now often accompanied the Doctor some distance on his rounds, and both acquired together a deeper acquaintance with the life of the Rhineland. The Doctor explained that he had an object in this, holding that it was a very important thing in a man's life to make a point of getting the best wines that could be had, and carrying out his point. Roland could and should do that. It was no less important to procure the good wine of the world, than its beautiful works of art. And if a sense of his dependence upon the Rhineland were instilled into Roland, much that was noble would result, especially if he could be brought into connection with the family of Weidmann.

The Doctor was the best of directories, knowing every house and its inmates very intimately, and speaking of everybody with discriminating justice, showing the dark as well as the bright side with equal impartiality. House after house furnished them with a refreshing sketch of life, and cellar after cellar with a refreshing draught.

"They talk about the deterioration of the race," said the Doctor edifyingly, "and there seems to be a chronic ailment, but it is not dangerous. People use themselves as filters and pour in wine; so it has always been; and so it will be. If the sun shines very hot, they think they are entitled to drink; and if the weather is disagreeable and wet, they must strengthen themselves with a good draught."

They alighted at a house, which had in front a statue of the Holy Mother with a lantern in her hand.

"Up-stairs here," said the Doctor, "pure genuine wine is sold; the man here supplies the church and the church dignitaries with the communion wine, which must be unadulterated. This man's father is a famous embroiderer of church-cloths, and his brother an illustrious painter of saints; and when people can turn their religion to any profit, they it hold it in sacred earnest. The main point is, not to impugn the uprightness of believers, and then they are inclined not to question the uprightness of us unbelievers."

They went on farther to another house, and the Doctor said: —

"Here dwelt a merry rogue, who has actually made the house haunted; he was an old screech-owl, a mason by trade. It's known that he had a little chest made by a carpenter, with a lock by a lock-smith; and this chest he walled into the cellar, which he built alone by himself. It is now believed that there must have been a consider-

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able sum of money concealed therein; and yet he may have been rogue enough to hide there an empty box, in order to play a joke upon those who should come after him. And now the people are undecided whether to pull down the house or not, in order to find the box. It's possible they may find an empty one, and have a demolished house for their pains."

The Doctor gave such a turn to his information about men and things, that Roland could derive advantage from it.

The Doctor greeted in a very friendly way an old man with a crafty countenance, who was sitting in front of his house. The man asked the physician if he would not take another drop of "the black cat," and they went with Eric and Roland into the cellar, where they drank a fiery wine from a cask on which, in fact, a black cat was sitting, though it was an artificial one with shining glass eyes. The old man was excessively merry; and clinking glasses with Roland, he said: —

"Yes, yes, we are all bunglers compared with your father."

Then, with great gusto, he praised the shrewdness and craft of Sonnenkamp, and Eric looked timidly at Roland, who appeared to be but little affected by what was said; when they went away the Doctor said: —

"This is the genuine peasant, for the genuine peasant is really the greatest egotist, thinking only of his own profit, though the whole world beside should fall to pieces. This is the old burgomaster who lent money to people needing it, and when a bad season came, he made an immediate demand for it, with unrelenting harshness, so that their vineyards were sold at public auction; and now he possesses a large landed property, yielding the best wines. Yes; he is a cunning rascal."

This narrative produced a wholly different impression upon Eric from what it did upon Roland, for the latter considered that the rascality was a matter of course. Eric looked askance at the Doctor, for he could not conceive how he could be on such friendly terms with the burgomaster; and when he further asked whether the man was respected, he received an emphatic response in the affirmative, inasmuch as property secured respect in the country.

They also stopped at the gauger's, the good-humored brother of the whole country around, and were led by him through the wine-vaults, and supplied with many a good drop to drink. The gauger always liked to tell stories that were not always fit for a boy to hear, but the Doctor soon led him to a different subject.

The gauger always carried with him some flour bread, which he called his "little sponge." "With straw," he said, "they tie up the wines, and with this little piece of bread, that has been grown from the straw, I fasten in the wine." They had calculated that the gauger had drunk, during his life-time, seventy butts of wine; but he asserted that they had been very tender to him, for he had drunk a great deal more than that.

It was a merry, exhilarating life into which Eric and Roland were inducted, and when they returned to their strict method of study, there was a deep realization of the fact that they were living in the midst of a merry region, where existence can be easily wasted in play.

It was midsummer, and there came cold, windy, disagreeable days, when it seemed that summer had departed, and yet it could not be, it must become hot again. The nightingale was voiceless; it had not ceased to sing all at once, but seemed to utter occasionally single notes from memory, while there were heard more frequently the thin voices of the linnets, or the full, short call of the blackbirds. The summer shoots on the leafy trees showed that the summer had reached its height, and was declining; the forest-trees had attained their season's growth, and the song of birds had ceased, except that the unwearied black-cap still twittered, and the magpies chattered among the branches.

Eric and Roland often sailed upon the Rhine, and Eric sang; he was rejoiced to hear Roland say: —

"Yes, it is so. A person can sing at all seasons of the year, if he has a mind to."

Eric nodded, feeling that the consciousness of art and of a free humanity had been awakened in Roland; and he now said that they would absent themselves for a few days from the house, and proposed to Roland two plans: either they would go to Herr Weidmann's, of whom there had been so much said, or to the great musical festival that was to take place at the Fortress. Boats ornamented with parti-colored streamers, having singers on board, went up the river and were greeted at all the landings with the firing of cannon. Roland requested to go to the festival, and he wanted to walk a part of the way, desiring to see again, and this time in company with Eric, the road over which he had wandered by night.

They set out in good spirits, and Roland was very talkative, relating to Eric all his adventures. They came to the wood, and Roland gave an account of his falling asleep, and of his wonderful dream. He blushed

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while telling it, and Eric did not ask what his dream was. Roland went silently into the wood.

"Here it is; here it is!" he suddenly exclaimed. "Here is my porte-monnaie! God be praised and thanked, I have not been robbed. Come, let us go to the village, where the hostler lives whom I suspected, and I will give him all the money."

They proceeded to the village, but the hostler was not there, having been drafted into the military service.

Roland was very sorry at that, and wrote down the man's name in his memorandum-book.

The two went on through the country clothed in the green of summer, and when they reached the railroad, took the cars for the Fortress. All was here decked with flags, and the whole town appeared in holiday attire. Men and women streamed in from all quarters, some on boats and some in the cars, singing in clear tones, and were received with a hearty welcome. Eric was happy to be able to say to his pupil: —

"Remember that this belongs to us. — Neither the Greeks nor the Romans had such celebrations, nor any other nation but us Germans."

They spent the night at the Fortress, and the next morning all assembled, the hundreds of male and female singers, and a great crowd of listeners, in the festival hall now properly ornamented, but at other times used as a fruit-market. A gloomy rumor was spread through the assembly; the singers shook their heads, and clapped together their hands, while among the audience there was a commotion and a rustling.

A man of fine voice, an experienced singer, had been suddenly taken ill.

"Look yonder," said Roland; "there sit nuns, and there are pupils, in the school-dress that they wear at Manna's convent. Ah, if Manna should be here too!"

Eric said to Roland: —

"Stay here; I will see if I can be of any assistance. I depend upon your not quitting this seat."

He went up to the singers on the platform, and spoke earnestly to the leader, by whose side he stood. Men came up to them while they were talking together, and went away again. Suddenly all eyes were turned towards Eric, and a whispering and a buzzing went through the assembly. Master Ferdinand, the conductor, tapped with his baton, and his look, which directed and inspired all, was smiling. There was silence, and in a tone that won all hearts he said: —

"Our baritone has unfortunately been taken ill, and this gentleman by my side, who does not wish his name to be mentioned, has kindly offered to undertake the solos for our absent friend. You, as well as we, will be grateful to him, and willingly extend to him the requested indulgence, as he has made no rehearsals with us."

A universal applause was the reply.

The choruses began, and their tones, like the voice of many waters, moved Roland's soul. Now Eric rose. All hearts were beating. But at the first tone he uttered, each one of the singers, and each one of the listeners, looked to his neighbor and nodded. It was a voice, so full, so deep, so penetrating the heart, that all held their breath as they listened. And when he had ended, a storm of applause broke forth which seemed almost to shake the hall.

Eric sat down, and the choruses and then other solo performers sang; again he rose, and yet again, and his voice seemed to grow still more powerful, and to penetrate more deeply into the hearts of all.

But how was it with Roland, one of the thousands who listened, and who were thrilled by the sound of this voice, in the depths of their souls?

The choruses rolled in like billows of the resounding sea, but when Eric sang, it was as if he stood upon the deck of a noble ship, and ruled over all; and this voice was so near to Roland in its friendliness, and yet so nobly exalted! The youth was possessed by that feeling of blissful, dreamy gladness which music awakes in us, transplanting it into the depths of our own life, and causing us to forget our own dreams, and merging our own individual self in the sad and blissful element of being.

Roland wept; Eric's voice seemed to waft him upwards into an invisible world, and then the choruses began again, and he seemed to be transported into a heavenly state of existence.

Roland wanted to tell his neighbor who the man was, for he heard on all sides questions and conjectures; but he said to himself: —

"No one else knows who he is, except me."

His eye now swept again over the collection of girls dressed in blue, and one of them nodded to him. Yes, it is she! it is Manna! He requested those sitting near him to let him pass through them; he wanted to go to his sister and to tell her who it was that had just brought such blessedness into the hearts of all. But he was repelled with vehemence, and his neighbors scolded about the saucy youth, who was so restless and out of humor, and wanted to create a disturbance.

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Roland remained quiet, and by that means let slip the suitable opportunity of the intermission, for pressing through the crowd to Manna.

The Oratorio was ended, but the applause of the assembly, did not seem likely to end. There was a universal call for the stranger's name.

"Name! Name!" resounded from a thousand lips, with noisy demonstrations and shouts.

Then Master Ferdinand tapped with his baton again upon his desk, nodding in a friendly manner to Eric, who held back, and all cried: —

"Silence!"

Eric rose, saying in a composed voice, —

"My sincere thanks. That I have been able to take part here, has been to me a divine service, a service to divine art; and because I do not desire by any unfamiliar name to lessen the feeling of devotion awakened within you, and for this reason only, have I been reluctant to give you my name."

"Name! name!" was again called out by the assembly.

"My name is Doctor Dournay."

"Huzza! Huzza!" burst out the whole assembly, and the orchestra played a threefold flourish, all shouting: —

"Huzza, Doctor Dournay."

Eric was almost crushed, and his shoulders ached with the congratulatory strokes upon them.

He saw himself surrounded by those who were already acquainted with him, and those who desired to make his acquaintance. The assembly dispersed.

Eric looked around for Roland, but he was nowhere to be seen. He walked about the square in front of the music-hall, and then returned to it; here he found everything in confusion, for they were rushing in every direction, setting the tables for the festival-dinner. He waited a long time, for he felt convinced that Roland had got lost in the crowd, and would come back here.

At last Roland came, with glowing cheeks.

"It was she!" he exclaimed. "I went with her and her schoolmates to the boat, and they have now set off.

"O Eric, how splendid it is, how splendid, that you sang, for the first time, to her! And she said you could not be so godless, for you sang so devoutly. She said that I was not to tell you this, but she is a rogue, she meant that I should tell you. O Eric! and the Justice's Lina, and the Architect, too, are among the singers; they are walking arm in arm, and they recognized you, but they did not betray you. O Eric, how you did sing! it seemed to me that you could fly too; I was every moment afraid that you would spread your wings and fly away."

The youth was in a state of feverish excitement.

An usher came to invite Eric and his brother — such he supposed Roland to be — to be present at the dinner and to sit near the director.

Others came who knew him, and strangers who wished to be introduced.

A photographer, who was one of the solo singers, besought Eric to allow him to take his photograph, while he was waiting for dinner, as hundreds and hundreds of the singers wanted to have a picture of him.

Eric declined, with thanks, these manifestations of friendliness, and took, with Roland the first boat to return to the villa.

Roland went into the cabin, and he was soon sound asleep; Eric sat alone upon the deck, and he was troubled with the thought of having been brought so prominently before the public. But he considered, on the other hand, that there are times when our powers do not belong to ourselves alone, and when we cannot ourselves determine what we will do. I did what I was obliged to do, he thought.

When they came to the stopping-place, Roland had to be waked up. He was almost dragged into the row-boat, and he was so confused and bewildered, that he did not seem to know what was going on around him.

After they had disembarked, he said: —

"Eric, your name is now repeated by thousands and thousands of people, and you are now very famous."

Roland, who had never sung before, now sang, the whole way home, a strain of the chorus.

They found at the villa letters from Eric's mother and from Herr Sonnenkamp. His mother wrote, that he must not mind it if he were reproached with having sold so cheaply and so speedily his *ideal* views, for people were angry, and were partially right in being so, at his abrupt departure without saying good-bye.

Eric smiled, for he knew right well how they would have their fill of jesting about him around the so-called black table at the Club-house, where, year after year, the shining oil-cloth was spread over the untidy table-cloth. It appeared incomprehensible to him how he could ever have fancied spending there a day of his life, or a bright evening.

Sonnenkamp's letter made a wholly dif-

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ferent impression; he authorized Eric, in case he thought it worth while, to take the journey to Biarritz with Roland.

"My father will like it, too, that you have received so much honor; the nun, indeed, who accompanied Manna, said that he would not take it well, that you had made yourself so notorious."

Eric looked disturbed. The feeling of servitude and dependence came over him. He had pledged his whole personal being to Sonnenkamp's service, and in all his actions he must first ask himself the question, how they may perhaps be taken by his master.

The whole day was now strewed over with ashes, and in place of the lofty feelings that had animated him, he now experienced a degree of depression of spirit.

CHAPTER XIV.

ONE'S FELLOW-MAN.

AGAIN the days flowed quietly on in work and recreation. One day Claus came and asked Roland to keep his promise of showing him the whole villa from top to bottom.

"Why do you want to see it?" asked Eric.

"I should like for once to see all the things which rich people have, to know what they do with all their money."

A knavish glance shot from the huntsman's eye, as he spoke. Eric gave the requested permission; he would have preferred to send a servant, but he went himself with the man, of whom he felt a sort of dread, not liking to leave him alone with Roland. He could scarcely give a reason for his uneasiness, except that the manner in which the huntsman dwelt upon the rich and poor might confuse Roland's mind.

They went through all the stories of the house, and Claus, who hardly dared to put his foot down, kept saying,—

"Yes, yes, all this can be had for money! what can't be got for money?"

In the great music-hall, he stood on the platform, and called to Eric and Roland:

"Herr Captain, may I ask a question?"

"If I can answer it, why shouldn't you?"

"Tell me fairly and honestly, what would you do, if you — you are a liberal-minded man and a friend of humanity — what would you do, if you were the owner of this house and so many millions?"

The huntsman's loud voice resounded through the great hall with a discordant echo, which seemed as if it would never cease.

"What would you do?" he repeated. "Do you know no answer?"

"It is not necessary for me to give you one."

"All right; I knew you couldn't."

He came down from the platform, saying, "I am field-guard, and as I wander about at night, it seems to me as if I were possessed of an evil spirit, which I can't get rid of. I can't help thinking all the time, what would you do if you had many millions? It drives me almost crazy; I can't get away from it, and it appears that you can't answer the question, either."

"What would you do?" asked Eric.

"Have you no idea?"

"If I had much money," answered Claus, laughing maliciously, "first of all I'd cudgel the Landrath to a jelly, even if it cost a thousand gulden; it's worth the money."

"But then?"

"Yes, then — that I don't know."

Eric looked at Roland, who looked back at him with dull, troubled eyes, and compressed lips. The unconsciousness of wealth to which Knopf had alluded seemed destroyed, suddenly and unseasonably uprooted. Roland could never be led back to it, and yet was not mature enough to see his way forward.

Eric said to Roland in English, that he would clear up the matter for him, but that it was impossible to find an answer fit for an ignorant man.

"Would an ignorant man have asked the question?" answered Roland in the same language.

Eric remained silent, for he could not disturb and spoil the clear preception of his pupil, even to relieve and set him at rest.

"Ha, ha!" laughed the huntsman scornfully, "now I'm rid of it, now you've got it. Wherever you go or rest you will hear what I've been asking myself in all the passages and all the rounds. Very well! if you ever find the answer, let me have the benefit of it."

He put on his hat and went away. It was impossible to fix Roland's attention upon anything throughout that day; he sat alone in his room; late at night, after Eric had been asleep, he heard him go into the library to get something.

Eric let him take his own course, then going into the library, he saw that it was the Bible which he had taken; he was probably reading the passage concerning the rich young man; the seed, which had until now lain dormant, was beginning to sprout. Eric had pursued his work of quiet preparation until now, when an outside influence had come in, and with rude grasp had awakened what should have slept on.

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What is all our teaching and preparation for? It is the same in external nature; the buds swell quietly till a wild tempest bursts them suddenly open. Now the wild tempest had swept over Roland, and Eric could not shelter him.

Very early the next morning Roland came to Eric's room, saying,—

"I have a favor to ask."

"Tell me what it is. I will grant it if I can."

"You can. Let us forget all our books to-day, and come with me to the castle."

"Now?"

"Yes; I have a plan. I want to see myself how it is. Let me, just this one day."

"Let you do what?"

"I want to work like the masons' apprentices up there. I don't want to eat and drink anything except what they do, and I want to carry loads up and down like them."

Eric went to the castle with Roland, but on the way, he said,—

"Roland, your purpose is good, and your wish pleases me, but now consider. You are not undertaking the same work as the men yonder, but work much harder, for you are not accustomed to it; this one day would bring ten times as much fatigue to you as to them, for you come to it from different circumstances. What is habit to them is new to you, and doubly difficult; and, moreover, you are not like them, for you have been tenderly and carefully nurtured; your bed is wholly unlike theirs; you have tender hands; it is quite a different sort of strength which you possess. So you would not learn what poor people feel, who have nothing but their native energy to help them support life."

Roland stood still, and there was an echo of what he had read in the night in the question, as he asked with a troubled voice, "What shall I do then, to make my own the life of my fellow-men?"

Eric was struck by his tone, and by the form of his question; he could not tell Roland how happy he felt, but he was sure at this moment that a soul, which bore and cherished such desires within it, could never go far astray, nor lose the sense of the union and mutual dependence of mankind. He restrained himself from expressing his feeling, however, and said,—

"Dear Roland"—he had never before said dear Roland—"the world is a great labor-association; the same task is not laid upon all of us, but it is enjoined on every one to feel himself the brother of his fellow-men, and to know that he is the guardian of himself and of his brothers. What we can do is, to prepare ourselves and hold ourselves ready to stand by our brother's side, and reach out a hand to him as often as the call may come. The work which will one day be yours is different from that of the laborers yonder, who carry stone and mortar; your work is greater, and more productive of happiness. Come, the time has arrived for you to see into many things."

CHAPTER XV.

LIFE, AND THE EXTERNALS OF LIFE.

In the Bible it is related, how the boy Isaac went with the Patriarch Abraham up the mountain-side where the sacrifice was to be offered. He walked on, silent and thoughtful, till at last he asked,—

"Where is the offering?"

He did not know that he himself was to be the offering.

So Roland followed Eric, silent and thoughtful; he had offered to sacrifice himself, but the sacrifice was refused. What next?

Above, on a spur of the mountain, overlooking the surrounding country, they sat down; the wild thyme spread its fragrance around them. Eric took the hand of his pupil and began,—

"Well, it must be,—it ought to have come later,—I had hoped that you would not have come to this question for a long time, and then in some other way. Do you know what wealth is?"

"Yes; when a man has more than he needs."

"How does a man get this superfluity?"

"By inheritance and by earning."

"Can a brute animal be rich?"

"I should think not."

"Certainly not; every animal is, and has, only what he has been and has had from his birth. Now, to go farther, are the men of these times better than those of old times?"

"I think so."

"Will men ever be better than now?"

"I hope so."

"And how will they become better?"

"By civilization."

"Is civilization possible, when a man has to work hard from morning till night for the satisfaction of his physical needs?"

"Hardly."

"How then can a man do anything for the improvement of himself or his fellow-men?"

"He needs leisure for this."

"And does not that leisure come only when he has gained through his labor a surplus of wealth?"

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"It seems so."

"Remember this, then: wealth is an accumulation of power which is not obtained by one's own labor."

"Stop, wait a minute," said Roland. He thought for a moment and then said, — "I have it, I understand it now; pray go on."

"What, now, should a man do, who comes into possession of so much power that he has not worked for?"

"I do not know."

"Then I will tell you. By means of what a man has beyond the absolute needs of life, he attains those things which beautify and elevate life, art and science. Wealth, alone, makes possible the progress of the human race; that a man can become rich involves his higher destiny; he lives by others, and for others; without accumulated surplus, without capital, there can be no higher knowledge of life, no advancement of it, no science and no art. Wealth is the possibility and the obligation to gain and increase, for one's self and for others, the higher benefits of existence; the rich man is not rich for himself; whatever advantages he possesses in the way of knowledge, of improved machinery, of invention, he has and uses in order to obtain more wealth than his necessities demand; these advantages he possesses only by means of others who have worked before him. In the last analysis, then, the rich man is so through his own means, or for his own advantage; he is only an administrator of the accumulated results of labor, and he must so administer it as to serve the highest good of mankind. Look around! there lie the fields, the vineyards, — whose are they? There stand stones, boundary-stones, placed here and there over the land, as points of legal division between mine and thine; no one can step over the boundary of another, or encroach on another's domain; they are the scattered stones, which, in the eye of the imagination, help to form the great temple of law which protects humanity. Not so evident, but not less firmly fixed, are the boundary-stones throughout life; you may not encroach on what belongs to another, on the results of his labor and of his natural powers. See! there the boatman directs the helm; there the vine-dresser digs the ground that the rain may reach the roots of his vines; the bird flies over the river; men row and dig, animals fly and crawl, only to gain a living. Then comes temptation to man and says, — 'Let others work for you; live upon the sweat of their brow; their bones are yours, consider them not; take gold for their labor, gold weeps not, gold hungers not, gold complains not, — it only glitters; when you have it, you can sing, dance, drive over men's heads, be carried on their extended arms; don't hang back! the world is a field of plunder where each one takes what he can seize.' So speaks the tempter, but the spirit of the true life says, — 'You are only what you are in yourself; whatever worldly possessions you have are indeed yours, but are not *you*; to-morrow they may no longer be yours; but to-day they are, and you may multiply them a thousandfold, so that they may be a blessing to you, and yours, and those around you.'

"If you have not genius—that is not to be acquired—then get character and education, which can be acquired, and by means of them gain all which is worth the gaining. Glory and greatness are good, but every one cannot attain them; every one can be contented in himself and helpful to others. Wealth is an instrument useful for many purposes, but only when one knows how to use it. You cannot destroy the evils that are in the world — hunger, sickness, and crime; but you must not fling away the power that lies in your hand; the great duty is yours to beautify and elevate the world. Rejoice in your possessions, for they enable you to create beauty and to give joy. First of all, create in yourself beauty and joy, the power of self-denial, pleasure in accomplishment; and be ready to stand firm in yourself, if outward supports should be taken away. He who places the centre of gravity of his being outside of himself, on something upon which he leans, falls when that support is removed. Be firm in yourself, keep your centre of gravity in yourself, learn to know and to rightly value yourself and the world around you. The present is a time of preparation; you have as yet no duties towards others. Your only duty is to yourself. Bind together the powers within you, and do not dissipate your being; and if you are your own master, you are always rich; but if you have not control of yourself, you are always poor, even were millions in your possession. If you possess yourself, you are lord of your riches."

They were both silent for a long time. It is impossible to say in what direction any given thought may lead, or what previous thoughts are associated in its development.

"I should like to know," began Roland, "how it seemed when America was first discovered."

Eric explained to the boy what a revolution in ideas the great intellectual discov-

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eries of the sixteenth century had made. There stood a man in a little German town, who said, and proved, that the earth on which we live is no fixed point; it turns continually on its axis and in its orbit around the sun. The whole mode of thinking of mankind for centuries was entirely changed. Man lives, then, on this ball that we call earth; he harvests and builds, he travels by land and sea, upon a ball which is constantly turning. When the heart of mankind first learned that, a shudder must have passed through it; the heavens were removed, there was no more sky, the whole old idea of a king of the world, sitting enthroned thereon, was overthrown; what was called the sky, was only the firmly-bound, countless order of constellations, which move in their orbits, attracting and repelling each other.

Then came another man, who said, "There is no man on earth, who, sitting on his throne, holds in himself the eternal spirit which gives him the right to teach and dictate what men shall believe and hope." Dissension appeared in the Church, and tore the civilized world asunder.

"And still another man, with his companions, entered a ship, sailed towards the north, and discovered a new world. In the house which we inhabit, an immeasurably large room was suddenly opened, wherein dwelt men who knew nothing of our life, while we, on the other hand, were ignorant of the endless variety of plants and animals, of boundless forests and rushing torrents, that existed there. The discoveries of Copernicus, of Luther, and of Columbus, must have produced a revolution in the minds of men at that period, to which nothing in our age can be compared. If we should be told now that all private property was to be given up, so that no one should longer possess anything for himself alone, the revolution in our minds would not be greater than it was in men's minds at that time."

Roland sat gazing in wonder at the man, who placed him upon such a height that he could see all life and being forming itself anew, and unfolding before his eyes. Eric paused, in order that the vivid impression, which it was evident he had made upon his pupil, should not be disturbed and effaced by further speech. The question arose in his mind, whether he had not given to the boy ideas and suggestions which he was not able to grasp; but he comforted himself with the example of the Church. She gives the young soul what it does not yet desire, what it is not yet able to understand; but she gives it in the hope that it will bear fruit in riper years. May we not — must we not do the same?

The quiet thought of the two, reaching out towards the infinite, was disturbed by the architect, who came to tell them that a Roman tomb had been discovered, and in it, an urn, a chair, and a skeleton. Eric went with Roland, and this disinterment of a man so long dead gave the boy a shock. What is the world? What is life? A future age finds the skeleton of a man which it passes by with indifference, and only asks,— "Are there, withal, the remains of the industry of former times?"

What is life?

As if waking from sleep, Roland heard Eric express his joy at the discovery, which would give so much pleasure to Count Clodwig. And now all the boy's thoughts were turned into a new channel, and his perplexing doubts forgotten. Eric rejoiced in the versatile mind of youth, which at one moment is entirely absorbed in some overpowering thought, and the next is engrossed by another which entirely displaces the first. This is the blessing and joy of youth. Roland was full of plans for the foundation of a museum, and Eric encouraged him in them, and took pains to show that here was an example of what possessions really mean; these historical treasures did not belong to him who called them his, but to the world, which from them could learn something of former ages; no one could have them for himself alone. This is the true idea of possession, freed from all material weight. Thus ought we to look upon all the possessions of the world.

This incident seemed to lead the boy's mind to composure. But as they were going home, he asked,— "Now tell me, Eric, what would you do if all this wealth were yours? Can you tell, Eric, now?" "Not exactly. I think I should waste much of it in experiments, in trying to alleviate the sufferings of humanity. I have often speculated about it, and the first greeting that came to me was,— 'What is a million? What are millions? What do they mean?'" As Eric was silent, Roland asked, "Well, have you found what they mean?" "I have first made this clear to myself. In order to know how great value any sum possesses in itself, I have first asked, 'How much bread could be bought for a million?' And by means of this somewhat childish question, I came, as I believe, upon the right road."

"Which is?"

"I tried to find how many families a million would support. That, I think, is the road, but of course I have not yet reached the end. I repeat, however, that first of all we must make sure that we are strong enough to do the right, at all times, under

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all circumstances. What time or circumstances may demand of us, no one can determine beforehand."

"Stay by me always, and help me," begged Roland. Eric took the boy's hand and pressed it, and they went on quietly towards the house.

CHAPTER XVI.

A GOOD NEIGHBOR.

There is many a chance which seems like a summons. Eric and Roland had spoken of Clodwig on the mountain, and when they reached home, they found a message from him, saying that he and the Countess had returned from the baths, and would visit them to-morrow.

Clodwig was brown from his summer-journey, and Bella looked younger than before, and seemed, as she swept with her long train through the house and park, somewhat like a peacock. As soon as they arrived, Roland gave an account of the curiosities found on the mountain, and his face fairly shone with delight when Clodwig asked him to consider them the starting-point of a museum for himself; for in making a collection of this kind, he would experience a pleasure to which scarcely anything else could be compared. Roland nodded to Eric, and Clodwig told them he had made many valuable acquisitions in his journey, which would soon be sent to him. He had met daily at the Baths a celebrated antiquarian, who had once been a teacher of Eric.

Eric apologized to Clodwig for having slighted his friendly advance, in not visiting him before he set out on his journey, and now another pleasant trait was seen in Clodwig,—that he had not one trace of sensitiveness. Kindness of heart and self-respect combined to cause this trait; he excused every neglect of himself, and, as a man of unquestioned position never thought of injury or slight.

"You are exempt from all apologies with me," he said, taking Eric's hands and holding them as though he were the young man's father. "You have cured me of selfishness. I had not believed that there was so much of it left in me, my dear young friend. Yes, you shall mould your own life, and I will rejoice that I have you for a neighbor. A good neighborhood, with the ancient Romans, was not merely a political arrangement."

They touched glasses and drank to the good neighborhood, and as the old Count drank, his eyes beamed upon Eric.

It was an animated account that Clodwig and his wife alternately, interrupting each other, gave of their having turned aside from their direct course, and spent a night in the University-town for the purpose of visiting Eric's mother and remaining an entire day with her. At last Clodwig left the field to his wife, who told with great feeling and earnestness of the life of the noble lady. She described the piano-forte in its old place, and the beautiful, dignified figure sitting at work before her window filled with flowers. On the wall before her hung the portraits of her dead husband and of her son, and in a frame by itself was a lock of her mother's hair, hanging between the crayon portraits of her parents. Still she was not at all melancholy, but cheerful and interested in every subject, taking part in every discussion.

Then Bella described the lovely valley, and their visit to the renowned mountain-chapel; and Eric could almost hear his mother's voice, and see her gentle face, as she sat by the beautiful lady, listening to Clodwig, and nodding assent and pleasure. It was for Eric an hour of deep and quiet happiness, laden with the memories of his home.

And not less beaming were Roland's eyes, as he asked:—

"And didn't she speak of me?"

"Almost more than of her own son," Bella answered. And then she turned again to Eric, and could not say enough of the impression which had been made upon her by the sight of a woman like his mother, who, living in another world, yet retained such an interest in this; who, having given up so much, yet possessed everything in herself.

Clodwig smiled, for Bella was repeating the very words he had used; but she continued,—"I think I never understood you, Captain, until I had the happiness of meeting your noble mother. We agreed to write to each other, from time to time, although she absolved me on the spot from any feeling of obligation to do so."

More and more happy, and at home, did Eric feel with Clodwig and Bella, and it seemed as though the spirit of his mother was lingering near them with a benediction.

"But we must not forget your aunt!" Clodwig exclaimed, and then went on to say that he had renewed an old acquaintance with her; he remembered well the dazzling beauty of Fraülein Dournay, and what an excitement was produced when she, a citizen's daughter, was presented at court, and invited everywhere. The story went that she and Prince Hermann, who died in his youth, had loved each other with the purest love, and, for his sake, she had refused all offers of marriage; but of this Clodwig did not speak.

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As they were walking in the garden after dinner, Bella said to Eric: — "You have had a very beautiful, happy youth; but one thing was wanting."

"What is that?"

"A sister."

"I would be glad to think that she had come to me," Eric replied, in a low voice.

Bella looked down, for a minute, and then called Roland to her. They went on to the castle, and Clodwig begged the Architect, for the sake of his young friend, Roland, to be very careful whenever traces of further remains were discovered.

The company sat down on a projection of the castle-wall, where the Major had made a comfortable seat. Clodwig and Roland were together, and Bella and Eric were sitting at a little distance from them. She was inclined to be romantic. She had brought from Paris all the new fashions, but now she said to Eric, How foolishly we burden ourselves with superfluities! Then, without any apparent cause, she remarked, that everybody thought she was fond of display and fashion; but she would like best to live in a little fisherman's hut, on the Rhine, in one quiet room, with a bright fire.

"And who would make this fire?" Eric inquired.

Bella started at this question. "We must not be romantic," said she. Then there was a long pause.

At last Eric began. "You have learned to know my mother; if you had known my father, you would have found great pleasure in him too."

"I did know him, but I thank you; I understand that you would have me share all that is yours." There was a heartfelt expression in her voice, and her eyes beamed, and she fixed them upon Eric with such a look, that he turned his own away. Biting her lip, she continued: "You have seen, — yes, you have certainly noticed how I look at you. Now I must fulfil one of Clodwig's wishes, because I think that perhaps I may succeed. He wants me to take your likeness, and I will try; but I must have your young friend with you. Roland, come here," she called, as she saw the boy approaching; and then she explained, with blushes overspreading her face, that she had wished to surprise Clodwig with the portrait on his birthday, but that that was impossible now, and she must do it openly.

"Please, Roland, sit down on the Captain's knee. So,— yes, just so, — put your right hand on his shoulder, but farther forward. Yes; now put your head a little more to the left. Pray say something, Captain. You must be telling Roland some thing."

"I've nothing to say," replied Eric, smiling.

"That will do; I see the motion of your lips; it will be difficult, but I hope to catch it. When will you sit to me?"

Clodwig was delighted, and said he never liked surprises; a well-prepared and long-expected pleasure was much more desirable. He urged Eric and Roland to be his guests at Wolfsgarten, until the family should come back. But Eric declined with equal friendliness and firmness; he did not like to disarrange the daily routine which he had laid out for Roland; and Clodwig approved of his resolution, and promised to come again soon to the villa with Bella, and have the portrait taken there. Bella wished a photograph of Eric and Roland in the positions she had chosen for them, but Clodwig said that a portrait taken with the help of a photograph was always stiff and unnatural; he condemned photographs of human figures, of which they could give only the mere form, and often wholly out of drawing. Roland had a word to say also, in regard to the picture. Why not have Griffin in it? Clodwig agreed, saying the dog would make a very good foreground.

Bella was out of humor. She had enjoyed companionship and gaiety so long, that she was reluctant to go back to her lonely life among the antiquities; perhaps there were further unacknowledged reasons for her regrets. The visit to Eric and Roland was a welcome reprieve to her; but the proud Captain was so reserved, and had always some great principle so ready to apply to even the smallest action, and her husband — his worst weakness was beginning to show itself, the doting fondness of old age — whenever the Captain spoke, Clodwig was wholly absorbed in the young man.

Her features seemed suddenly to become thin and faded, and to lose all roundness. She noticed this, and recovered her self-control. She was especially friendly, and when Eric took leave of her and kissed her hand, he thought he felt a returning pressure on his lips, but perhaps it was a mistake, or arose from some awkwardness on his part. While he was thinking about it, Roland said,—

"I don't know why, but I did not feel comfortable while the Countess was looking at me, did you? and she looked at you so strangely."

"It was the critical look of an artist," answered Eric; but his own words choked him. Who knew whether this reply was the exact truth?

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CHAPTER XVII.

TO FORM A MAN.

The Major sent no notice of his approaching visit; he came himself. He looked very fresh with his reddish-brown face, and his snow-white, short-cut hair, and he said that as often as he had bathed in the warm spring, he felt as if he could remember the very first bath after he was born. He seemed to himself, every time, literally like a new-born child, with an unseen nurse, who bent smiling over him and dipped him gently in the spring. He smiled at everything, at the trees, the roofs, the houses, and now at the faces of his friends.

He was very glad that Eric had taken the boy out of the ranks and was exercising him alone; it was hard, to be sure; but more progress could be made in one day, than in weeks by the other method.

He begged Eric to excuse himself in a few words to Fräulein Milch for not visiting her when she was so lonely, and he urged Eric to come soon, for the Grand Master was there.

The Major, as has been said, lived in a wing of the country-house, beautifully situated on the mountain-side, of which he had the care. With the greatest solicitude the Major preserved his own independence in life, but he felt a deep obligation toward the Grand Master, whose universal friendliness and agreeable conversation he was never weary of extolling. He always wanted to share with him every pleasure and advantage, and now what had he better than Eric, whom he praised so continually that his stock of eulogistic expressions became completely exhausted, and he found more than usual difficulty in saying what he wished.

On his first leisure evening Eric visited the Major. He easily made peace with the Fräulein; and the Major laughed till he choked and had to be brought to with a slap on the back, because he had made a joke, a most unusual thing with him, about Eric's confinement for six weeks.

Fräulein Milch told of Eric's glory at the singing festival, and the Major said, —

"That's good. At our feasts, singers are very important. But can you sing, 'These holy halls'?"

Eric regretted that the air was too low for his voice.

"Then sing something else; sing for Fräulein Milch."

Eric had difficulty in declining this friendly request, and Fräulein Milch thanked him, and helped him carry out his wish to defer the performance to some appointed evening. The so-called Grand Master was as disagreeable in his behavior, as Fräulein Milch was charming. There was something unpleasantly patronizing in his manner; it seemed as if he were so accustomed to flattery, that only a simple unpretending nature, like the Major's, could be at ease with him. The Major took great pains to bring his true friends together, but he did not succeed. The Grand Master behaved arrogantly towards Eric throughout. He addressed him only as "Young man," and gave him instruction and advice, as if Eric were in his employ. It required all Eric's self-possession, to show the man, good-temperedly, the impropriety of his treatment for the Grand Master was so inconsiderate as to speak, even in Roland's presence, of the want of experience of the "young man," who had, of course, come to him only to listen to his oracular sayings; and his whole manner of speaking had something oracular about it, as he gesticulated with outstretched hands, as if sowing seed. Eric kept his temper enough to treat this insolent creature as a singular, natural phenomenon. He patiently allowed himself to be patronized, and when Eric had gone, the Head Master said to the Major, — "That young man has ideas."

It is true, Eric had not expressed any ideas, but he had listened well, and so was awarded praise for them, which was a great deal from the Grand Master, who considered that nobody but himself had properly any ideas; and the whole world ought to come to him to be taught. When Eric returned to the Major's, he found a messenger, who had come to say that Clodwig, Bella, and Pranken would come there the next day. Roland had gone into the court with Fräulein Milch to admire the young ducks.

The Major now asked on what terms Eric stood with Pranken. Eric could only answer that Pranken had been very friendly, and considerate, in his treatment of him.

The Major, who had risen through every grade of the militia from drummer-boy up, lived in a constant state of resentment against the haughtiness of his noble-born comrades; he admonished Eric, however, to conduct himself gratefully towards Pranken, who was really a very well-mannered fellow, in spite of his noble birth; an obstacle that it was very hard for the Major to get over. He thought that Pranken deserved Eric's gratitude for having introduced him into his present position, and reminded Eric that he had also been the means of his gaining so valuable a friend as Clodwig.

As Eric and Roland were going towards home, Eric said, —

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"Now, Roland, we will show that we do not allow ourselves to be disturbed; come what will, we will have our studies uninterrupted; we won't see visitors except in play-hours. You see, Roland, this is one great difficulty in life. From complaisance towards the world, and from an unwillingness to appear disobliging and ungracious to our friends, we often allow our own privacy to be invaded. Against this we must stand firmly: each must just be something for himself, and then come out into the world. He who cannot exist for himself may possess the world, but not himself."

In the consciousness of fulfilling his duty, Eric became again strong and self-contained, and scattered every disturbing influence far away.

CHAPTER XVIII.

UNDER-CURRENTS.

The visit took place. Pranken rode behind the carriage in which Clodwig and Bella were seated; on the back seat of the carriage stood a frame-work covered with paper, and a handsome box ornamented with inlaid work, which held the crayons.

Eric and Roland received the guests, and Eric begged them to make themselves at home; he had had everything arranged by the servants; he would himself be at their service in an hour, when lessons were over.

The visitors looked at each other in astonishment.

Pranken looked strangely changed; a deeper seriousness was in his face; now he shrugged his shoulders, and burst into a mocking laugh.

Bella thought Eric's conduct extremely formal and pedantic; Clodwig declared it showed a beautiful trait of character; but Pranken saw only idle display in this assumption of duty; the young man — he said this quite in the tone of the Grand Master — the young man wished to make a great impression with his faithfulness to duty.

Meantime they made themselves comfortable, and it was not to be denied that Eric had shown great thought for the pleasure of his guests, in his floral decorations, and other arrangements.

The hour was soon over, and Eric returned to his guests in that fresh and cheerful mood, which only the conquest over one's self and the consciousness of duty fulfilled can ever give.

He had selected a good room, looking towards the North, and after a lunch the drawing began.

Clodwig remained with his wife; Roland, who was to be drawn later, went with Pranken to the stables. Pranken conducted himself in the house as Sonnenkamp's natural representative, or as a son of the family; he had the horses brought out, he examined the gardenwork, and praised the servants.

"I never saw you looking so serious and anxious," said Clodwig to Eric. And, indeed, Eric's expression was full of uneasiness, for he suspected that Pranken was now talking about him to Roland.

What can all education, all firm guidance effect, when one is not sure for a moment that some foreign influence is not working against it? We must comfort ourselves by thinking that no one man can form another, but the whole world forms each man. Eric, meanwhile, could not but dread what Pranken might be saying to his pupil.

First, Pranken asked whether Roland had read the daily portion in the book that Manna sent him.

Roland said, no, directly, and then came a confused jumble of Benjamin Franklin, of Crassus, of Hiawatha, of the observations of storms by the telegraphist, and of Bancroft's History of the United States.

Pranken nodded; he asked if Roland wrote often to Manna, and Roland said yes.

Pranken now told him that he had trained a snow-white Hungarian horse for Manna, and added: —

"You can tell her so, when you write, or not, as you please."

He knew, of course, that Roland was sure not to forget any information which he was allowed to impart, especially if it was about a snow-white horse with red trappings. Pranken promised that Roland should himself ride the animal some day.

"Has it a name?" asked Roland.

Pranken smiled; he perceived that his communication had interested Roland extremely, and he answered, —

"Yes, its name is Armida."

Just then Roland was called in, as he was needed for the sketch. When the outline was completed, the drawing was laid aside for awhile.

In a half-confidential, half-commanding tone, Pranken asked Eric to go out with him alone, and in a friendly, even unusually friendly manner, he entered into a discourse upon Roland's education. And now, for the first time, Eric heard Pranken speak seriously of his strict religious convictions.

He was amazed. Was this all put on, in order to win more securely the rich heiress educated in the Convent?

But it certainly was not necessary for Pranken, when no one could see and remark upon it, in travelling, and at the Baths,

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to unite himself so closely with ecclesiastics. Was it not rather probable that a conversion had really taken place in this worldly man, and that upon just such a nature the stability and unchangeableness of the Church would take the surest hold?

"I consider it my duty, and you will give me the credit of considering it a duty," said Pranken suddenly, laying his hand on his heart, "to give you some confidential information."

"If I can do anything, I shall feel myself honored by your confidence; but if I can be of no use, I would rather avoid an unnecessary share in a secret."

Pranken was astonished at this reluctance, and was inclined to be displeased, but he restrained himself, and continued, in a higher tone: —

"You know that Herr Sonnenkamp —"

"Excuse me for interrupting you. Does Herr Sonnenkamp know that you are making this confidential communication to me?"

"Good Heavens!" Pranken broke out, — "but no, I am wrong. I respect this regard to your position."

He was silent for a few minutes; it occurred to him that, instead of what he had meant to say, he might warn Eric not to have too much to do with Bella. But would not this be an insinuation against his sister? He decided to go back to his first plan, and said shortly, —

"I think I may tell you that I am almost a son of this house. Fräulein Sonnenkamp is as good as engaged to me."

"If Fräulein Sonnenkamp is like her brother, I can congratulate you heartily. I thank you for your unexpected, and as yet undeserved, confidence; may I ask why you have honored me with it?"

Pranken became more inwardly enraged, but outwardly still more flattering; he nervously worked his right hand, as if he were using a riding-whip, but he smiled very condescendingly and said, —

"I have not been mistaken in you." After a pause he continued: — "I acknowledge fully your considerateness."

He did not answer directly the question as to the cause of his confidence, and there was hardly time, for Roland now called Eric to the sitting.

"One would think ten years had passed since I left off drawing," said Bella, "you look so much older now."

Eric could not speak out his thoughts. The way in which Pranken had treated him, and the manner in which he had borne himself, disturbed him very much. He was sitting now quite still, but it seemed to him as if he were being rent asunder. He felt that there was something fundamentally false in his relations with Pranken. They were both aware of the contrast and discord which existed between them; they ought either to have been open enemies, or to have passed each other with indifference; and yet some spell seemed to draw them together, and to persuade them into apparent friendliness.

All misery springs from untruthfulness. The world would be quite a different place, and much misery would be saved, could we be true at all times, and not allow ourselves to be led into lasting relations and obligations, while we silence the inward remonstrance by saying, — It will all turn out well; the matter need not be taken so seriously. But in thousands of cases the lie is concealed, veiled, beautified, as in that Bible-story, where the serpent overcomes all opposition, all argument, by the words, — "Only eat, and you will not die, but only become wise."

The great punishment of a relation founded on false grounds is, that it constantly demands from us farther untruthfulness; either openly recognized as such, or concealed by our self-deception, and at last the lie takes on the appearance of virtue, changes all the foundation of our character, silences the protests which our better nature makes, and says, You must not desert your friend; you have been friends so long, you have received so much from him, and have done so much for him; it would break up your whole life; you would take a large portion from it, if you gave him up. No! you must now hold firmly together. And so the lie grows and poisons life. All sorrow and all unhappiness, all misunderstanding and deceit, arise from the fault that man will not be faithful to himself. The devil of lies goes about, seeking whom he may devour.

It is true there is no devil that you can see so as to describe him in the military style, but close by every divine idea which in its ultimate foundation is nothing but Truth, dwells the Lie, and is always capable of assuming the form and language of its neighbor.

All these thoughts were tossing and raging in Eric's soul as he sat for his portrait. Could any one at that moment have painted the picture of his soul, it would have been an unparalleled distortion.

At last, Bella declared she could not draw him as he then looked, and the sitting was postponed.

They all went to dinner, which passed cheerfully, for the Doctor joined them. In the evening, they went out rowing on the

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Rhine, and Roland told how beautifully Eric could sing; but Eric could not be persuaded to give them a single song. He was bantered on having displayed his talent at the musical festival, by Pranken especially, who spoke in a friendly tone, but with a most cutting manner.

In the evening, when the fire-flies were darting here and there in the dusky park, Eric walked with Bella, while Clodwig sat in the balconied room, turning over the leaves of an album filled with new photographic views of Rome, and, at many a page, looking far away into the past.

Roland walked with Pranken, and they talked of Manna. Pranken knew well how to suggest what he should write of him. In walking, they passed and repassed Eric and Bella, and Pranken looked surprised at seeing his sister leaning on the young man's arm. Like glancing fire-flies, the brilliant flashes of wit lighted up their conversation, but left longer trains of light behind them. Bella and Eric spoke in a low tone, and often, as the others passed near them, they stopped speaking. Bella talked again about her good-husband, — she always called him her "good husband," — and said how thoughtfully Eric understood him, not only, if she might say so, with his mind, but with his heart.

"You have made a new phrase," said Eric, and Bella repeated her newly-coined expression, with as much pleasure as if she had found a new style of head-dress which suited her face alone.

Eric was pedantic enough to go back to the original subject of discussion, and said warmly, how delightful it was to find Beauty and Peacefulness, not only in one's own ideal, but in real life; to reach out one's hand to them and look into their calm, clear eyes.

"You are a good man, and I believe an honest one," said Bella, and pulling off her glove she lightly tapped with it on Eric's hand.

"It is no merit to be honest," said Eric. "I could almost wish I could be untruthful; no, — not untruthful, but a little more reticent sometimes."

It was charming and edifying, to hear how Bella now extolled the beauty and happiness of a thoroughly honest nature; and she spoke in a tone of deep emotion, as she added, that she might have won early in life a most brilliant lot, if she could have feigned a very little love. Eric did not know what to answer, and this caused one of those pauses which Pranken, passing with Roland, observed.

Bella went on to say, that it is always a blessing to do anything to help a human being; it falls to the lot of one person, to do this for a fellow-creature in the morning of life — here she bent her head towards Eric — while another does it for one in the decline of life, when the sacrifice, quiet and unrecognized, can only be rewarded by the consciousness of the service rendered.

At a bend of the road, it happened, very naturally, that Eric walked with Roland, and Pranken with his sister. Roland was jealous of Bella, of every person; jealous at every word, at every look, that Eric directed to any one but himself; he wished to have him wholly to himself. And as Roland now exhibited his childish humor, Eric shrunk into himself affrighted; he had not only allowed himself to be diverted from Roland, but perhaps also had been committing a wrong in a different direction. There was yet time for him to retrace his steps. He went to bid Clodwig good-night, and he was almost pleased to find that he had already retired to rest.

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CHAPTER XIX.

READ BY ANOTHER'S EYES.

On looking at the picture, the next day, Bella was painfully dissatisfied with her work. What she had done with so much care and diligence seemed to her false in drawing and expression. She grew positively angry over it, and would have made a fresh beginning had not Clodwig, by his gentle persuasions and judicious praise of the many excellencies of her picture, succeeded in soothing her. She could not help saying, however, with some bitterness, that it was her fate to have everything she undertook turn out otherwise than she had desired, and upon Clodwig's assuring her that such was the necessary result of every attempt to embody our conceptions, she exclaimed impatiently, "I am not what I am." The real cause of her discontent was hard to determine. It was more than the mere dissatisfaction of the artist and disappointment in her own powers.

The strict discipline which Eric had wished to maintain was now much broken in upon. Bella always carried through whatever plan she had laid out for herself, acting upon her favorite theory that it was well to allow men to think they had some authority, but that must be all.

Roland soon turned the conversation to the subject always uppermost in his mind, the life of Franklin. Bella expressed a wish to learn something about it, and Clodwig, after a little sketch had been given of what had been already gone over, was quite ready to resume the reading where it had been dropped before. Eric and Roland, who sat upon a raised platform, listened eagerly. The reading gave rise to many an animated discussion, for Bella entered with remarkable ease and readiness into everything that was presented to her. Eric was disturbed by her speedy detection in Franklin of "a certain dry pedantry, a stinginess of nature," which her acute criticisms set forth in strong relief. He could feel the emotion her words caused in Roland, who was sitting on his knee.

In these days, it is impossible for a young man of Roland's antecedents and present position to preserve a perfect ideal. If rightly guided, and established on a solid footing, it might perhaps be useful for him to see his ideal attacked, and even distorted.

With all the eloquence at his command, Eric stated the difficulty that beset the enlightened mind of the present day, in having no authoritative voice in the place of that of the Church, to say at every point of life's journey, "Follow thou me." We moderns must recognize what is pure and lofty in noble natures, though cramped by the many limitations incident to our age and individual constitution.

Bella's pencil worked rapidly while he was speaking, and she often nodded her head assentingly. When he ended she looked full at him, and said, —

"You are the best teacher I ever met with;" then, with beaming eyes and glowing cheeks, she turned again to her work.

"That depends upon the pupil," answered Eric, politely acknowledging the compliment.

"I want you, now," continued Bella, still blushing deeply, "I want you to lay your hand on Roland's head. Please do; it will give precisely the effect I desire. Please do as I say."

He consented, protesting at the same time that the idea did not please him, for Roland should learn to carry his head free.

Bella shook her head with vexation, and continued her work, no longer, however, on the figure of Eric, but solely on that of Roland.

"Now I have it!" she suddenly exclaimed; "that is it! You resemble Murillo's St. Anthony."

"That is just what I noticed," cried Roland. "Manna scolded me for it at the musical festival."

Clodwig also agreed with his wife.

"It is a favorite picture of mine," he said. "How plainly I can see it now before me! The figure of Anthony on his knees, with a knotted staff beside him; the landscape barely indicated; a tree in the background, and the thicket near by. Angels are playing on the ground and floating in the air; one turns over the leaves of the Saint's book, while another holds up to an angel hovering in the heavens a lily which has grown from the earth; the flower thus forming, as it were, a link between heaven and earth."

Eric was somewhat embarrassed by Roland's relating how he had fallen asleep in the chapel of the convent, and how suddenly the black nun stood beside him, and he saw the picture above him.

A request of Eric's that the reading might stop here, and the reasons on which he based his request, assumed various shapes in the minds of his hearers.

"To-day's experience convinces me," he said, "that we cannot control our thoughts or pursue them to any worthy issue, when obliged to remain in a position foreign to those thoughts, or in one at least that has no connection with them. There

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is a mysterious sympathy between our thoughts and the position and state of our bodies."

Eric's words worked in four different ways upon the party assembled. In his own case, they served to describe his position as tutor. Roland thought of the masons at work on the castle, and wondered what they must be thinking of while perched in mid air on their scaffoldings, or while hammering the stone. Clodwig, too, must have found the words bear in some way upon his life, for he shook his head and pressed his lips hard together, as he was wont to do when thinking. But upon Bella they produced the most striking impression; she suddenly let fall from one hand her pencils, and from the other the bread which she used for the occasional erasing of a line. Eric instantly restored them to her, and she took them from him with a vacant look and no word of thanks. He had brought before her the picture of her married life. Thus this one key-note had struck four different chords.

For a long time no word was spoken.

The presence of Clodwig and his family at Villa Eden caused great excitement in the neighborhood, and appeared to place the tutor in a very peculiar position. Pranken, however, viewed the matter quite differently, and, as acknowledged son of the house, invited to Villa Eden the Justice, with his wife and daughter, who had just returned from the Baths.

His manner towards Lina was particularly friendly and intimate; he took long walks in the garden with her, and made her tell him about her life in a convent, which she did most amusingly, giving comical descriptions of the sisters, the Superior, and her different companions. Her only object in staying at the convent had been the learning of foreign languages. Lina's perpetually gay spirits began to have a cheering effect upon the melancholy Pranken. Something of the Pranken of old times was roused within him. Why need the present be empty and barren? it said. Bella has her flirtation with the Captain, why should he not have his with Lina? Why not indulge in a little harmless jesting, perhaps even admit the excitement of some feeling? He could control himself at any moment.

The old Pranken, the Pranken of the days before, seized his rescued moustache with both hands and twirled it in the air.

It was a good idea, during this pause in his life, to amuse himself with the Justice's Lina. He could imagine himself transported back to the days before that visit to the convent, and add this to the many other experiences of his past life which Manna would have to forget.

Lina meanwhile received his attentions very unconcernedly, showing equal friendliness of manner towards both him and Eric, whom she always called her brother in music.

There was a constant stream of jesting and laughter in the Villa and park. One day Pranken induced his brother-in-law to go boating with Lina and himself, while Bella remained at home to draw. He wanted to take Roland also, wishing, with a certain recklessness, to leave the other two alone together for once. But Roland would not leave Eric; he even openly avoided Pranken's society.

Lina sang gaily as they sat together in the boat. Her love-songs were given with a sweetness, an abandonment, that Pranken had never heard from her before. Clodwig described her singing to his wife, on his return, as being as simple and beautiful as a field flower.

Bella begged the Justice and his wife to let her take Lina back with her to Wolfsgarten. The Justice's objections were overruled by his wife, and Lina was full of delight at setting off with Bella and Clodwig.

Pranken rode beside the carriage.

The quiet of this loneliness weighed heavily again upon Eric and Roland, after the animated society of the last few days. Eric, beside, was out of tune, weary and dull. He found it a burden to be obliged to devote himself from morning to night to this boy, to have to watch his undisciplined, and often capricious, fluctuations of mind. He longed for the society of Clodwig; still more, though he hardly acknowledged it to himself, for that of Bella. There had been a novelty, an animation, an excitement, an atmosphere of graceful elegance, about the rooms, which were now so desolate. Nevertheless, he resisted for several days Roland's entreaties that they should make the promised visit to Wolfsgarten. The house had been entrusted to his care, and he refused to leave it, until Pranken, at length, offered to take all the responsibility upon himself. There was a sting in his words, as he said to Eric, —

"You were present at the musical festival, and left the house then in charge of only the servants. Besides, as I say, I assume the entire responsibility."

CHAPTER XX.

ENTERING INTO THE LIVES OF OTHERS.

BEAUTIFUL it is in the valley, on the river's

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bank, where the waters glide by so swiftly, yet so undisturbed; beautiful to see how they glisten in the daylight, reflecting every passing change in the sky, and bearing to and fro the hurrying boats; and again in the evening, to hear the quiet murmur of the stream, as it lies under the radiance of the moon. But beautiful it is also to look from the mountain-top, over the forests, the terraced vineyards, the villages, the cities, and the far-reaching river.

A fresh impulse and animation were now given to the life at Wolfsgarten. The picture of Eric and Roland was brought to completion, and Eric set in order Clodwig's cabinet, thus introducing his pupil to the curiosities of antiquity. There was singing and laughing, there were walks and rides in the neighboring forests, and many a memorable conversation.

Bella often took the parrot with her when she walked with Eric through the park and the forest. The bird took a great antipathy to Eric, and would scold at him from its place on its mistress's shoulder. Sometimes she let it loose with the injunction, "Be sure and come home at night, Koko;" and Koko would perch upon a tree, and fly this way and that, through the forest, always returning at evening. Her freed slave, Bella called him, at such times.

Now, however, Koko had been absent two days. Clodwig offered every reward to get the bird back again, never remarking how quietly his wife took her favorite's loss.

As a matter of course, Bella walked with Eric while Roland and Lina roamed about together in the forest, Lina delighted at being allowed to revel in a child's freedom. At other times, when Eric and Bella were strolling through park and forest, Roland would sit in the potter's workshop, where the clay from the neigboring hills was moulded. He had the whole process explained to him, and was amazed to see what care and labor a single vessel required. Two boys, of about his own age, trampled the clay with their naked feet in order to render it pliable, after which workmen formed it into tiles and architectural ornaments. At a potter's wheel sat a handsome, powerfully-built youth, turning it with his bare feet; then he lifted the clay with great care into the required shape, formed the rim and the nose, and almost tenderly raised the finished vessel from the wheel, and set it in its place on a shelf with the others. He always took precisely the quantity of clay required for the vessel, and never allowed his heavy hands to make on it an impression which he had not designed.

Roland watched the whole scene thoughtfully. Could these men be helped by money? No; their life might be made richer, but they must still work.

The young man who shaped the vessels was dumb. He would give Roland a friendly glance when he entered, and then quietly keep on with his work. The master praised him very highly to Roland, who, being desirous of doing something for him, presented him with his handsome pocket-knife. It contained many instruments within it, and much delighted the poor mute.

Roland told Eric what he had seen, and what thoughts had come into his mind. He had noticed that the workmen had their food brought them, from a great distance, by old women and little children, and asked whether no better arrangement could be made for them.

Eric looked at the boy with unsympathizing eyes as he spoke. How he would once have rejoiced in this proof of his pupil's interest in the welfare of his fellow-men; but now he seemed wholly absorbed in other matters.

A beautifully engraved card brought to Wolfsgarten a piece of news that proved a fertile subject of conversation,— the betrothal of the Wine-count's daughter with the son of the Court-marshal. It seemed an extraordinary step on the part of the young man, who was suffering with a mortal disease, but still more extraordinary that the lady, a fresh young girl, overflowing with life and health, should have made up her mind to such a union. Lina, who was well versed in the private history of every one in the neighborhood, accounted for it by saying that the Wine-count's daughter had always expressed a great desire to be a widowed baroness. There was a deep undertone of meaning, a something not wholly expressed, in Bella's way of speaking of this connection, particularly when addressing Eric, which seemed to take for granted that he would understand what she half concealed.

The newspaper brought another piece of intelligence, the return of the Prince's brother from America, where he had been a careful observer; and his bringing with him for the Prince a freed slave, in the person of a handsome African.

While they were still discussing the impression which a sight of the American Republic must make on a German prince, Roland came in from the forest, exclaiming, —"I have him! I have him!"

He was holding the parrot by his claws.

"There you are again, my freed slave!" cried Bella, as the bird tore himself from Roland's grasp, and, perching upon his mis-

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tress's shoulder, began a violent scolding at Eric.

Clodwig did not allow himself to be easily interrupted in a discussion he had once entered upon, and proceeded to state the results of his observations in the world. Bella took an active part in the conversation. It sometimes seemed to Eric, that there was nothing beyond a certain superficial cleverness in her ready flow of words; but he rejected the criticism as a pedantic one.

His life among books, he said to himself, had rendered him unsusceptible to this easy, graceful brilliancy, while his profession as teacher led him to be always on the watch for an elaborate network of thoughts and impressions, where there was meant to be nothing but a simple expression of natural feeling. He now gave himself freely up to the pleasure of enjoying the close companionship of so richly endowed a nature. These butterfly movements of the mind he began to look upon as legitimately feminine characteristics, which were not to be roughly criticized. Hitherto he had been familiar, in his mother and aunt, only with that severe and business-like conscientiousness, in all intellectual and moral matters, which borders on the masculine; here was a nature that craved only to sip the foam of life. Why require anything further of it?

When Bella was one day walking with Eric in the park, Roland and Lina meanwhile sitting with Clodwig, she complained of not being able to repress the religious doubts that often beset her, while, at the same time, existence without a belief in a compensating future life was a terrible enigma. Without wishing to weaken this idea, Eric sought to give her the assured peace which can be found in the realms of pure thought. There was a strange contradiction in the hearts of these two, imagining, as they did, that they were speaking of things far above and beyond all life, while in reality they were talking of life itself, and that in a way whose significance they would not willingly have acknowledged to themselves.

Suddenly Betram came riding towards them, his horse white with foam, and while at a distance cried out, —

"Herr Captain, you must return instantly."

"What has happened?" asked Eric.

Clodwig came up with Roland and Lina, and Pranken also appeared at the windows, all anxious to know what had happened.

"Thieves! robbers!" cried Bertram. "The villa has been broken into, and Herr Sonnenkamp's room entered."

A few moments later, Eric and Pranken were in the wagon driving back to the villa. Pranken's vexation was extreme, for he had taken the whole responsibility upon himself.

For a long time neither of the three spoke, until at last Roland broke the silence, by asking Eric what he thought Franklin would have thought and said of such a robbery.

Pranken replied with some warmth, "I should think a son's first question would be, 'What will my father say to it?'"

Roland and Eric were silent. Again they drove on for a long while without a word being spoken. Eric was tormented by accusing thoughts. He seemed to himself doubly a thief. These men had broken into the rooms of the villa by night; what had he done? He had forgotten the soul entrusted to him, and, worse still, after being received by the kindest friendship, he had, under cover of lofty thoughts and noble sentiments, in word, thought, and look been faithless to the most precious trust in the person of his friend's wife. He pressed his hand to his heart, which beat as if it would burst his bosom. Those men, for having stolen gold, would be overtaken by the justice of the law; but for himself, — what would overtake him? Conscious that Roland's eyes were fixed upon him, he cast his own on the ground in painful confusion.

Finally he controlled himself, and said in a trembling voice, that he should assume the entire responsibility; he acknowledged Pranken's friendliness, but felt that in such a case as this, no one could interpose between himself and the consequences of neglect of duty. So severely did he reproach himself, that Roland and Pranken looked at him in amazement.

CHAPTER XXI.

LEARN THE EVIL THAT IS IN MAN.

Villa Eden had hitherto been surrounded by a mysterious magic. Fear and envy had given rise to the report that there was something wrong about the inmates; about Herr Sonnenkamp, whom everybody saw, and Frau Ceres, whom scarcely anybody saw. The threats of spring-guns and man-traps posted upon the walls imbued the ignorant people in the neighborhood with an almost superstitious fear. It was even said that Herr Sonnenkamp had smeared the trap with a poison for which there was no antidote. The servants of the house affected somewhat the reserve of their superiors; they had little intercourse with others, and were hardly saluted by

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them. But the mysterious dragon, which, no one knew how or where, kept secret watch over the villa, seemed nothing but a scarecrow after this robbery; the beautiful white house was stripped of its charm; it was as if all the bolts were thrown back. Quickly the report gained ground that the house-servants had committed the robbery.

The people on the roads and in the villages through which the carriage passed looked up and nodded to Eric, Roland, and Pranken, as they drove swiftly by. The few who raised their caps did it hesitatingly, as if they, like the rest, would say, It is all up now with your master; the officers will soon find out what has been going on among you.

The three men found everything in confusion at the villa when they arrived.

The porter at once expressed conviction that the robbery had been committed by persons belonging to the house, because all the doors had been closely fastened, and not a dog had barked; showing that the thieves must have been familiar with the house, and well known to the dogs.

The officers were already on the spot. Sonnenkamp's work-room had been entered, and treasures stolen whose value could not be estimated, among them a dagger with a jewelled handle. The thieves had even tried to force the fire-proof safe, but in vain. Great goblets of gold and silver which stood upon the sideboard in the dressing-room had disappeared, as well as Roland's gold watch, which, when he went to Wolfsgarten, he had left on the table beside his bed. His pillow had also been taken, but was afterwards found on the wall, where it had served to make a smooth and easy passage over the broken glass which had been intended to make the wall insurmountable.

Two footprints were discovered in the park and behind the hot-house. The thieves must have stumbled among the heaps of garden mould, for on one of these was plainly visible the impression of a human body; one of the thieves had evidently fallen there. Here was also found a pair of the dwarf's old boots, which, on being compared with the footprints in the garden, were found exactly to correspond. Thus a clue was gained, though a very uncertain one. The dwarf just then came by, on his way to his accustomed work, and listened in astonishment to an account of what had happened. He was allowed to work on undisturbed.

The officer who had charge of the investigation, and his assistants, the burgomaster of the village, and some of the chief men, were assembled in the balcony-room, examining the various servants. Roland stood apart, his eyes fixed upon the pillow which had been stolen and made use of by the thieves in climbing the wall. He grew very pale, as he stood there listening to the questions that were asked of one man after another, in the hope of extorting something from each.

The dwarf appeared, and said that a pair of boots had been stolen from him.

"Yes," replied the officer at once, "the theft was committed in your boots."

The dwarf's face wore a simple expression, as if he had not understood what was meant.

The officer ordered his instant arrest. He complained piteously that the innocent were always the ones to be suspected, and Roland begged that the poor creature might be allowed to go free.

"I will throttle any one who touches me," cried the dwarf, his excitement seeming to make a different being of him.

At a sign from the officer, two men quietly bound the poor creature's hands behind his back.

Eric led Roland away. Why should he see this night-side of human nature?

Happily the Major appeared at this moment, and Eric delivered Roland to him.

"Here is a lesson for you, young man," said the Major. "Everything can be stolen from you, except your heart, when in the right place, and except what you have in your head; they can never be stolen from you. Mark that."

The officer had the servants brought before him, and questioned them as to the persons who had lately visited the villa. They mentioned the names of many, but the porter said, —

"The Herr Captain took the huntsman by himself over the whole house, and when he left he said to me, 'You guard the rich man's money and treasures, when it would be better to throw the doors wide open, and to scatter it abroad in the world.'"

Eric could not deny that the huntsman had observed everything very closely, and had talked in a confused way about the distinction of rich and poor; yet he thought he could answer for the man's honesty.

The officer made no answer, but despatched two of his men to search the house of Claus.

The huntsman smiled and shrugged his shoulders, when he saw what their intention was. Nothing was found, but in a kennel was chained a dog that barked incessantly.

"Unfasten the dog's chain," said one of the men to Claus, who had followed them through all the rooms and into the court, saying nothing, but keeping his lips moving all the time.

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"What for?"

"Because I bid you; if you don't do it at once, I shall shoot the dog through the head."

Upon the dog being set free, the kennel was searched, and in it, under the straw, were found Roland's watch and the jewel-hilted dagger. Claus was immediately bound and put under arrest, in spite of his earnest protestations of innocence. On the way from his house to the villa he kept raising his chains, as if to show them appealingly to the fields, the vineyards, and the heavens.

A list was made out of the stolen articles as far as they could be described, and Roland was summoned to sign his name for the first time to an official document.

"There is no calculating the effect such a thing must produce on the boy," said Eric to the Major, who was standing by.

"It will do him no harm," replied the Major; "his heart is sound, and Fräulein Milch says, 'A young heart and a young stomach are quick digesters.'"

Fräulein Milch was mistaken this time, for at sight of Claus brought in in chains, Roland uttered a cry of distress.

A new scent was presently started. The groom, who had been in Pranken's pay as a spy, and afterwards dismissed by Sonnenkamp, had, within the last few days, been seen and recognized in the neighborhood, though he had taken great pains to disguise himself. Telegrams were immediately despatched in all directions for the arrest of the supposed thief, and also to Sonnenkamp.

The priest came, lamented what had happened, using a noble charity in speaking of the disaster, and begged Eric not to lay it too much to heart, because, devoted as he had been to learning and science, he could naturally have no proper knowledge of the wickedness of his fellow-men, and had naturally allowed himself to be taken unawares by it.

Eric was more humbled in spirit than the priest thought reasonable. He remembered having once said, that the man who consecrates himself to an idea must renounce all else; and now he was humiliated by standing in the presence of one who, in his way, acted up to this sentiment, while he himself had allowed the excitement of mental dissipation to drag him down from his high standard.

The priest repeated, that in all our plans we should take into account the wickedness of mankind; and Eric, who hardly knew what answer to make, assured him that he was well aware of the necessity, having voluntarily passed some time in a House of Correction, for the sake of restoring guilty men to their better selves. Neither Eric nor the priest, who praised him, noticed the effect which this confession produced upon Roland. He was, then, in the hands of a man who had tried to counsel criminals, who had lived in a House of Correction! A fear and repugnance took possession of the boy's soul. Eric's motive was forgotten; Roland seemed to himself humiliated. He sat a long time silently buried in thought, his face covered with his hands.

The priest approached him at last, and admonished him not to let this accident dishearten him, but only let it teach him not to place his trust in the treasures of this world, particularly in his own possessions; neither to have that so-called faith in humanity, which is a deceitful faith, exposed to daily shocks; for there was but one sure and abiding faith, that in God, the supreme being, eternal and unchanging, who never deceives.

Roland remained silent and absorbed for some time after he and Eric were left alone; finally he asked: —

"Does my father know what you once were?"

"Yes."

"Why did you not tell me?"

"Why? I had no reason for concealing it from you, or for telling you."

The boy again covered his face with his hands, and Eric, feeling that the course he was here called upon to defend was one undertaken from the purest motives, while within him he was conscious of a guilt which none but himself could upbraid him with, explained to Roland how he had felt it his duty to devote himself to the most unhappy. He spoke so touchingly that the boy suddenly raised his head, and, holding out his hand to him, exclaimed in a tone of the deepest feeling: —

"Forgive me! Ah, you are better than all."

The words smote Eric to the soul.

The officers of the law had left the villa, and even Pranken had ridden away. Roland went about the house, looking fearfully behind him, as if he had seen a ghost, an evil spirit. The stairs had been trodden by wicked men, the doors had been tried by their instruments; the house and all its treasures had been desecrated; he had lost pleasure not only in the things which had been plundered, but still more in those which could not be taken, which the thieves had been obliged to leave.

He begged Eric not to leave him for a moment, so great was his fear. At night he was unwilling to go to bed; rest seemed impossible to him in a place where the

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hands of robbers had taken the pillows from his bed. Eric yielded to his entreaties that he would remain by him, and said, after Roland had finally gone to bed, —

"I owe you an answer to your question, — What would Franklin have said to this robbery? I think I know. He would have had no compassion on the thieves; he would have given them up to the full penalty of the law; but at the same time he would have maintained, that the wickedness of individuals should not be allowed to rob us of our faith in humanity; for if thieves could inflict that loss upon us, they would be robbing us of more than hands can touch."

Roland nodded assent. Long after he had fallen asleep, Eric stood by the bedside, thoughtfully watching the boy, who had had to learn this lesson thus early, — Of what use is all this subtle study; of what advantage any conscious training? An invisible, irresistible power, the great current of life's experience, educates a man far more than a single human teacher can do, and in a different way.

Long did Eric stand at the window, gazing out upon the river and the vine-covered hills. We all work according to the strength that is in us; the result of our labors lies not in our hands, but in the control of that invisible, all-embracing power whose origin we know not, and which we can only call God.

Eric was deeply moved. This event could not afflict his young charge so deeply as it did him, for he was conscious of a power mightier than any effort of his own thoughts, drawing him back from the edge of an abyss. He looked into the future, and a fixed resolve was formed within him.

He was summoned away by a messenger from the officer who had conducted the examination, bringing a telegram from Sonnenkamp. It ran thus: —

"Journey to sea-shore given up; coming home; shall find thieves, under whatever title."

BOOK VI. CHAPTER I.

THE MASTER AT HOME AGAIN.

Herr Sonnenkamp returned to his villa like a ruler to his castle where a mutiny has lately broken out. Every step in his house, every glance at a servant, said, I am here again, and with me authority and order.

Eric did not lay upon Pranken the blame of what had happened, but confessed that he himself had been guilty of neglect of duty. Sonnenkamp seemed to take pleasure in seeing Eric humbled. He was one of those who love to rule others. With enough humanity in him to make him prefer a willing obedience, he yet had no rest, when that proved impossible, till his man was subdued and brought to his feet; then, and not till then, was he willing to raise him up, for not till then was he sure of the mastery. This self-reliant Captain-doctor had assumed a demeanor that was unbecoming in him; now he was humbled, and would have to be grateful for every act of kindness and friendliness done him. Sonnenkamp had no suspicion of the satisfaction Eric took in his humiliation, or of his motives for it; he regarded this humble submission as a triumph of his authority, while to Eric himself it was a confession of weakness in having been tempted by the magic of Bella's charms to forget the strict watchfulness which was his duty.

Sonnenkamp soon perceived that the amount of the robbery was insignificant. He said, with a certain malicious pleasure: —

"The knaves stole my jewelled dagger; it has a poisoned point, which is death to whomsoever it scratches."

Eric had hardly power left to tell that the dagger was already in possession of the officers of justice, so great a horror thrilled him. Why should this man keep a poisoned dagger?

Pranken and the Major soon appeared, and Pranken was honest enough to take the whole responsibility upon himself. He could not refrain from saying, however, that Eric had previously left the villa to go to a musical festival, and had won a surprising reputation there. Sonnenkamp said, with a smile: —

"You kept Roland at home instead of letting him go to the Baths, in order to keep him free from excitement; have you preserved him from it?"

Eric was prevented from answering by the arrival of the priest, to whom Sonnenkamp, who had never made any gift to the church, announced his intention of presenting to it the gold and silver vessels which had been taken from the sideboard. As if involuntarily, he added: —

"I don't want them any more in my house. You, reverend sir, will give them a fresh consecration."

Eric expressed in a whisper to the Major, who stood by him, his pleasure at this arrangement, and his belief that it would exert a salutary influence on Roland, whose peace of mind had been in a great measure destroyed by the robbery. Sonnenkamp

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heard his words, though spoken in so low a tone, and said: —

"My highly honored Herr Captain, let me tell you honestly that I have nothing to do with sentimentalities, and that I desire Roland should early acquire a knowledge of these so-called well-disposed lower classes, and learn that they are nothing but a mass of conspiracy against the holders of property, awaiting the first favorable opportunity to break out, or rather to break in."

Sonnenkamp was in the highest degree animated and cheerful. His only cause of regret was, that there should have been so much talk made about the affair in the neighborhood, and that so much valuable time had to be lost in the processes of law. Frau Ceres said not a word about the robbery; it almost seemed as if she had not heard of it. She only rejoiced that Roland had grown so much during her absence. She told Eric that she had met at the Baths a most aristocratic and amiable lady, a relation of his mother, who had spoken of her with great enthusiasm.

The very first evening after the return of Sonnenkamp and his family, a carriage drove up in which were Bella and Clodwig. Eric was delighted to greet his friends, but was somewhat shy of Bella.

"We have come to protect you from this savage," she whispered to him behind her fan; "we will show him that you belong to us. And now you will leave everything and come to us, will you not?"

The words thrilled Eric; he could only bow his thanks.

Bella observed her husband's embarrassment as he stood with Sonnenkamp. His fine and sensitive nature could never overcome a feeling of timidity, of terror, whenever he found himself confronted with this herculean shape. Bella helped him out of the difficulty by saying jestingly, "Herr Sonnenkamp, you must have seen many strange things in your life; did you ever happen to fall in with thieves who openly confessed they had stolen, or were proposing to steal?"

Sonnenkamp looked at her in amazement.

"We are such thieves, in broad daylight," she cried, laughing, and turning to her husband she continued: —

"Now do you speak, dear Clodwig."

Clodwig hesitatingly expressed his wish to have Eric live with him. Sonnenkamp's sharp glance fell upon Bella. The forefinger of his left hand was already raised in playful menace against her, and he was on the point of saying, "I understand you," when he checked himself, and, laying his finger on his lips, said: —

"I am glad to see that our Herr Eric" — with a peculiar emphasis on the word "our" — "that our Herr Eric stands so high in your good graces."

Eric was struck by the peculiar stress laid upon the word "our." He seemed to have become a piece of property. Still more surprised was he at Sonnenkamp's offering him his hand the next moment and saying: —

"You remain ours, do you not?"

Eric bowed.

Bella dwelt, with intentional emphasis, upon the particulars of her visit to Eric's mother in the University-town. She evidently desired to let Herr Sonnenkamp know that a man of Eric's rank and position was not to be crushed on account of a trifling act of neglect. Sonnenkamp whistled to himself inaudibly, as if some plan were ripening in him.

Bella contrived again to be alone with Eric, and expressed to him her satisfaction at the success of her little plot. She knew, she said, that Sonnenkamp would not let him go, but she also knew that he would humble him on account of the neglect he had been guilty of, and therefore persuaded Clodwig to drive over at once. Eric was full of gratitude.

"Did you notice," she asked in a low voice, "what a look Herr Sonnenkamp gave me, and how he raised his finger at me? This man imagines that our friendship is something more than friendship; to the impure nothing is pure. I think you will not misunderstand me, if I sometimes intentionally slight you in the presence of this spying knave."

She gave Eric her hand, and held his long and tightly pressed. Neither suspected that from behind a bush two eyes were fixed upon them, and a sharp ear heard their every word. When they had passed on, Sonnenkamp drew a deep breath as a relief from the long constraint he had put upon himself.

CHAPTER II.

AN INALIENABLE POSSESSION.

The next morning came the tidings that the groom whom Sonnenkamp had dismissed shortly before his journey, suspecting him of being a spy of Pranken's, had been arrested in the capital in the very act of offering for sale a large silver goblet. Roland brought the news to Eric, and this was only one of the many interruptions liable

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at any moment to break in upon the hours of study and thought, in consequence of this robbery. Of what use were lessons when the mind was thus excited? What lasting impression could be made? At one time Eric thought of going hunting more frequently with Roland, in order to amuse him and let him gain fresh elasticity and powers of observation by the pursuit of new objects. But he finally decided on the opposite course, that of helping his pupil not by amusement, but by closer application to his studies. Great was his satisfaction, therefore, at having Roland say to him, —

"Let us forget all else and quietly go on with our work."

The boy's love of study had received an impulse which made every interruption distasteful to him, and led him to look for his best pleasures in his books.

Roland soon became conscious of a fresh energy in Eric, without being able to conjecture its cause; it was the exaltation that follows a danger escaped, escaped by one's own effort. Whenever Eric thought of the days at Wolfsgarten, and his trifling with those feelings which should be the finest of the human heart, he seemed to himself a thief. He had recklessly staked the entire capital which he had so laboriously won; he had allowed himself, under a pretended interchange of noble thoughts, to toy with Bella: to flirt, as he called it in plain language, with Clodwig's wife. To his mind, he had violated a sanctuary; how small, how infinitely small in comparison, seemed the offence of these poor people! He felt deeply humbled in his own eyes. How gladly would he have made a pilgrimage with Roland to some temple where he could purify himself, and where Roland could gain new strength! Whither should he turn?

It is easier for one wearied in the exciting race of life, and burdened in conscience, to enter into the invisible temple built with hands than into the visible temple of science; yet Eric succeeded in doing this. What he would with difficulty have accomplished for himself, perhaps would have failed to accomplish, he did from duty to another. He lost himself in the love of knowledge, and everything became clearer and more intelligible. As an experienced swimmer delights in the onward rush of the waves, dives below the surface to rise again to the light, and with vigorous arms divides the waters; so Eric plunged into science, and felt his heart swell with joy when the mighty waves roared towards him. Gone were all petty fears and anxieties, all self-contest.

In Roland, too, deep currents were stirred. He often went about as in a dream. The ground beneath him, which he now knew to be in constant motion, swam before his eyes: the heavens were no longer there; the old world was dissolved and a new one revealed; while mingling with all this new life within him was the thought that all private property would be abolished, and poverty and riches divided equally among men. Eric observed this excitement in the mind of his pupil. Roland said to him one day timidly, —

"Tell me, Eric, if there will ever come to be no more private property in the world, and consequently no more thieves."

Eric was startled to see how this strange idea had taken hold of the boy. He explained that he had only brought that up as an illustration; the thing itself was an impossibility; he had only meant to show what a radical change might be worked in the minds and lives of men.

Fresh evidences of this unaccountable tendency of the boy's thoughts were constantly appearing. One day he asked Eric to go with him to the huntsman's, to see how his wife and children were faring. He said he had met the man's son, a cooper in the service of the Wine-count, a little while ago, and had offered to shake hands with him, telling him the son was not to blame for what the father had done, even if he had done anything wrong, which he certainly had not; but that the cooper had stared at him, and instead of taking his offered hand, had drawn his hammer from his leather apron, swung it back and forth for a while, and finally walked off.

When Eric and Roland approached the huntsman's house, the birds in the cages were singing, busiest among them the blackbird, with his incessant chirp of thanksgiving, and the dogs were bounding merrily. The wife looked ill and slatternly, and was full of complaints. She told how she had wanted to let all the birds out after her husband was taken to prison, but her son, the cooper, insisted on everything being left as it was till his father came back, which was sure to be very soon; Sevenpiper had in the mean while undertaken to do part of her husband's work, and the cooper attended to the night duties, though he had to work so hard through the day. Everything should be done properly, that the place might be kept open for her husband.

Eric offered her a sum of money, which she refused, saying that her son, the cooper, had forbidden her to accept anything from Sonnenkamp's family.

"If this man is innocent, as I believe he is," said Roland, when they were in the villa

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again, "what can make up to him for all the anxiety and distress he has had to suffer?"

Eric had no satisfactory answer to give; he could only say that this was another proof of the fact that the best things in life could not be supplied by money.

CHAPTER III.

THE NEW ALLIES, AND A SUMMER FETE.

HARDLY two weeks had gone by before the lessons were interrupted again. Frau Ceres, who was generally very quiet and took no interest in anything, often referred to a promise she had made to take Roland to see the Cabinetsräthin, (wife of the *cabinet-minister*), whose acquaintance she had formed at the Baths.

A grand excursion to the capital was decided upon, which Eric alone was not invited to join. The party set out in two carriages. Frau Ceres, Fräulein Perini, and Roland in one, and Sonnenkamp and Pranken in the other.

Pranken began at once to express his satisfaction at the friendly interest Sonnenkamp had shown in the Church; he had on his side already put things in such a train that they could count upon the co-operation of the higher clergy, who were very influential at Court, in carrying out their plan. He felt some compunctions at profiting by his frequent and intimate intercourse with the Prince-cardinal, as a piece of diplomacy; but he was vain enough to wish to pass off upon the world in general and Sonnenkamp in particular, as a stroke of worldly wisdom, the inward illumination which he secretly gloried in. He rejoiced at the relation thus easily established with the Cabinetsräthin, upon whom outside pressure could be brought to bear in a way hardly possible with her husband.

As they drove by a handsome villa, whose shutters were all barred, Pranken suggested that Herr Sonnenkamp should buy it in order to sell it again at a low price to the Cabinetsräthin, who, as he knew, had long cherished a strong desire for such a residence. Sonnenkamp consented, on the condition that it would accomplish his object. It would be one of the levers, Pranken assured him, though not the only one.

Although the two were alone together, neither of them, singularly enough, mentioned their plan by name, till Sonnenkamp said that the Cabinetsräthin had told him a title of nobility was to be conferred on the wine-merchant, and that he wished he might get one first; for he thought he had a better right to the distinction, though he was not going to marry his daughter to a dying man, but rather to the fröshest and liveliest of noblemen.

Pranken smiled his thanks, but replied that this priority of the Wine-count, — it could hardly be called precedence— was rather advantageous than otherwise, as it made the conferring of titles appear not so much a matter of private negotiation.

"Your difficulties are greater than those of the Wine-count," he added: "for the Prince-cardinal stayed in his house on his last circuit, so that the Wine-count has on his side the church party, which is as discreet as it is powerful, while you, I would say we, have no party. So much the better; the victory will be all our own."

They reached the capital.

The Cabinetsräthin was delighted, and expressed to Pranken, whom she constantly treated as the head, in fact the president of the party, her great pleasure that a watering-place acquaintance should have ripened into a new friendship.

Pranken insinuatingly remarked that they might become neighbors too.

The country-house was glowingly described, and the fact cautiously yet emphatically stated, that Sonnenkamp had already bought the place for the sake of inducing some noble friends to settle there by letting them have it at a moderate sum.

The lady was delighted; she knew the house very well, it having once belonged to friends of hers whom she had been in the habit of visiting there. She quite envied the people who should live in such a home and have such noble neighbors. She had told her husband, she said, that it was a disgrace to the State that such a man as Herr Sonnenkamp should have no title.

Having thus prepared the way, Pranken disclosed his plan to the Cabinetsräthin, who assured him it could not but be a most desirable thing for society, to have a man of Herr Sonnenkamp's importance admitted to a higher rank. Sonnenkamp assumed an air of great shyness and modesty. A maiden receiving her first offer, which she was quite prepared for, could not have looked more bashfully on the ground; he actually blushed.

They drew their chairs nearer together, as if now for the first time a right friendly and confidential intercourse was established among them. The lady begged that nothing might be said to her husband upon the matter at present; she would manage that part herself; but it would be a good plan to set some other influence at work; if Count Wolfsgarten, for instance, would start

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the subject at court, it would be easy to play into his hands.

Pranken laid great stress upon the cordial friendship that existed between Clodwig and Sonnenkamp, but urged that a matter of this kind needed to be handled with the greatest delicacy, such as only a lady of the Cabinetsräthin's acknowledged tact was capable of.

Sonnenkamp declared that he did not ask for a title; it must be offered him; his friends must see to that. He rejoiced in the delicacy with which the Cabinetsräthin handled the matter, and he handled it in like manner; his whole demeanor said, This is something quite out of the common course.

He moved his hand quietly, as if he were stroking the back of a very soft cat.

"Are there vineyards attached to this country-house?" suddenly asked the lady.

"To the best of my knowledge," answered Pranken, "there are three acres most favorably situated."

He winked at Sonnenkamp, as much as to say that these must of course be purchased also.

Sonnenkamp at once lost his character of modesty and bashfulness; here was a question of money; here he was master. He wanted to tell the lady that he could not deal in any other than a business-like manner; when he had fairly got his patent of nobility she should take possession of the country-house and vineyards besides; but he was afraid to say it before Pranken, and besides it seemed hardly necessary to come out with it just yet. When it came to the point, he would be man enough not to allow himself to be cheated. There was a triumphant smile upon his face.

The Cabinetsrath entered, saluted Sonnenkamp with formal politeness, and expressed his thanks for the courtesies shown his wife at Vichy.

The party went into the hall, where were Roland and the son of the house, a cadet. Roland's beauty immediately attracted all eyes, and made him the centre of the group. The Cabinetsrath congratulated him on having for a tutor such a finished scholar as Eric, although he was somewhat eccentric in his theories, and as Roland answered some question that were addressed to him by saying he should like to be an officer, advised him to enter the school of cadets as soon as possible.

Pranken said in an aside to the Cabinetsräthin that he entirely approved of Herr Sonnenkamp's plan not to let Roland enter the school till he had received a title, thus sparing him many embarrassments; for if the boy were suddenly admitted to the nobility while in the school, there would be no end to the jokes he would have to endure from his companions.

The Cabinetsrath spoke of the rebuilding of the ruins, of Sonnenkamp's well-known skill in horticulture, and of the complimentary manner in which he had often heard them spoken of in the highest circles.

Sonnenkamp craved permission to send some of his products occasionally to the royal table, especially his beautiful bananas, which were now particularly fine. Pranken thought Herr Sonnenkamp's success in grape culture the most remarkable, for he managed to have fresh grapes upon his table every month in the year.

The Cabinetsrath replied that this courtesy would no doubt be very acceptable, but he had no authority to speak in the matter. The Marshal, who was a cousin of Herr von Pranken, would unquestionably accept the offer.

Pranken at once took Herr Sonnenkamp to see the Marshal, while Roland rode out with the cadet. Frau Ceres remained with the Cabinetsräthin, and apparently caused that lady great surprise by urging her to accept the coral necklace which she wore upon her neck, and which her friend had so much admired.

The lady was obliged to accept it, but begged Frau Ceres to consider it as a token of the intimacy of their private friendship, and not to mention the gift to any one else. She repeatedly declared that she used her interest for her friends without the least motive of selfishness. She laid great stress upon this point, being convinced that Frau Ceres was a party in the plan for gaining her by presents.

Frau Ceres looked at her in amazement, and thought herself again horribly stupid; the woman was speaking of things of which she knew nothing.

The party had not proposed to spend the night in the capital, but on the minister's wife proposing an excursion to some pleasure-grounds, Pranken insisted on their remaining till the next day. It would be a great advantage to have the two open carriages, with Frau Ceres and the Cabinetsräthin in one, and Sonnenkamp, Pranken, and the Cabinetsrath in the other, drive through the streets of the capital to these pleasure-grounds, where the best and most select society would be assembled. The best society should see that Sonnenkamp was already admitted to close intimacy with Count Pranken and the Cabinetsrath.

On the way the Cabinetsräthin was seized with an idea as amiable as it was wise.

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Both these merits delighted her, and not less her own good-nature. She should win an ally and help a poor woman. With great condescension and pity, she spoke of Eric's mother, who had with a foolish enthusiasm sacrificed her position to a so-called ideal love. Here the Cabinetsräthin looked towards Pranken, between whom and herself so close a league was already established that she did nothing without his approval. A scarcely perceptible nod from him showing her that she might continue, she appealed to Herr Sonnenkamp to do something for Eric's mother; if possible, even to receive her into his house. Aunt Claudine also was spoken of in terms of the highest praise.

The Cabinetsräthin imagined that her relations with the Sonnenkamp household would be much more easily maintained, if the Professor's widow and the aunt formed a part of it; then her intercourse would be in a manner with them, and not with this man. In fact it would be her duty to see as much as possible of these noble women, in order to soften their position of dependence; and that advantage, with many others, would be easily secured when she had established herself in that country-house, which of course had several acres of vineyard attached to it.

Thus there was a mingling of motives, with a good and animating result.

Sonnenkamp smiled blandly, but all the while was saying to himself, — These nobles hold together more closely than a band of thieves; in fact they are thieves, for all this impoverished nobility wants to bolster itself up by me.

He acceded politely to the lady's proposition, with the inward reservation, You have not that estate yet, and the Professor's widow may sit for a while longer at her sewing-machine.

They drove by the country-seat of the Prince, who had lately returned from America. Here everything was in perfect order, and a table, with servants in attendance, was spread in a long, narrow pavilion erected in a grove by the roadside. The sound of military music came from a public garden, and the trees were hung with bright-colored lamps. The officers of the Guard were holding a summer-fête here. Bands of music followed each other in quick succession, one beginning to play the moment the other ceased. The officers were already seated at a table spread under a great tent in the middle of the public garden; while at smaller tables near by sat the dignitaries of the capital, with their wives and daughters, in gay summer dresses.

The two carriages drawn by Sonnenkamp's noble horses attracted great attention. Pranken quickly gave the necessary directions, and established his party at one of the best tables, towards which many eye-glasses were instantly directed. Pranken, after speaking with his comrades and shaking hands with one and another, soon returned to Sonnenkamp and his party.

The Cabinetsräthin leaned in the most friendly way on Sonnenkamp's arm; Pranken escorted Frau Ceres; Roland and the cadet shot arrows at a target, Roland always hitting the bull's eye.

Sonnenkamp was introduced to the General, and received from him a promise soon to visit Villa Eden. Pranken was glad to be able to show a new recruit in the person of Roland.

As evening came on, the bright-colored lamps were lighted. Suddenly there was a firing of cannon, a beating of drums, and a shouting of huzzas, in honor of the arrival of the Prince from his estate to grace the banquet of the officers. Both bands struck up, "Hail to the Chief," and all was rejoicing. Happiest of the whole company, perhaps, was Sonnenkamp, who had been presented to the Prince and received a few commonplace words from him. Though the words were nothing, the world had seen the Prince speak with him and give him a friendly greeting.

They drove back to the capital in a high state of delight. The colored lamps kept shining and the music sounding.

The next morning it was announced in the papers: —

"Yesterday evening the cuirassiers of the guard celebrated their annual festival on Rudolph's Hill. His Highness, Prince Leonhard, graced the entertainment with his presence. Among the guests was Herr Sonnenkamp, of Villa Eden, with his highly-respected family."

CHAPTER IV.

THE PLACE IS TAKEN.

While the Sonnenkamp family was at the capital, Eric rode to Wolfsgarten. He had fought down every traitorous, unholy thought within him, or rather had prevented such from rising, and thought only of the obligation that rested on him to show his appreciation of the noble friendship which Bella had certainly manifested towards him, by speaking to her of the excellence and truly admirable elevation of her husband's character. That was his sole purpose, and with a clear and happy spirit he rode on his way.

He found Clodwig alone, Bella having

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driven out to make a visit. Clodwig was glad to have Eric for once all to himself; in former visits he had too often had to amuse himself with the boy, while Eric walked with Bella. Clodwig told of the son of a friend of his, the Russian Ambassador at Naples, who had come to pursue under his guidance the study of husbandry in Germany. The fact of the abolition of serfdom by the Emperor of Russia was producing a great moral and economic effect. The landowners would have to increase their own resources, as well as those of the soil; from mere landowners they must become husbandmen. The young Prince, like most other princes, had been a little wild in Paris, but there were the germs of good in him, and a power of will which encouraged the most favorable hopes. A sort of sacred zeal for self-sacrifice and devotion to the lower classes was not uncommon among the Russians, and often took such strong possession of the gay and dissipated as to recall the conversion of those saints we are told of, who, from the wildest debauchees, have suddenly been made conscious of their moral responsibilities.

"But be on your guard," he said, as if instructing Eric. "No aristocracy in the world is so eager for knowledge as that of Russia; but unhappily their zeal and aspirations run themselves out in a year or two, and they easily fall back into lazy indifference. They have a great talent for imitation, but how persevering it will be, or whether they can produce anything new, remains to be proved. Perhaps this freeing of the serfs is a great moral turning-point."

Eric thought it a glorious proof of the free spirit of the age, that this enfranchisement was the work not of the clergy, whose office it might seem peculiarly to be, but of pure and simple humanity, having no ecclesiastical stamp.

"That idea had not occurred to me," answered Clodwig, expressing his gratitude in word and tone.

The two men were still engaged in far-reaching discussions concerning the power of the spirit, and Clodwig was just expressing his pain at the power which brute force exercises over the spirit, so much greater than man is willing to acknowledge to himself, when Bella entered. Her face glowed as she greeted Eric; and her companion, an elegant but rather blasé-looking young man, gave him a gracious salutation. He was glad, he said, that Eric spoke French so fluently, for his own German was very clumsy; and he added that Eric's French descent was apparent in his accent, which was such as only a French tongue was capable of.

After separating for a short time, the party reassembled for a second breakfast in the room opening on the garden.

Clodwig must have strongly impressed upon the Russian the advantages he would derive from intercourse with Eric, for the young man addressed him at once by saying, "I should be very glad if you would let me learn something from you."

He said it so confidingly, and with so much of a child's submission, that Eric gave him his hand, saying, —

"I am sure I shall be able to learn something from you too."

"Except whist, which every one says I play exceedingly well, I am afraid there is nothing to be learned from me," laughed the Russian.

Then, as a man who at once looks to the producers for a knowledge of the products of a country, he said, —

"I hear that philosophy has gone out of fashion in Germany; can you tell me any reason for the fact?"

Clodwig nodded; the topic was well chosen, and the question modestly put.

Eric suggested as his opinion, without having any definite information to give on the subject, that perhaps philosophy was regarded less as a separate science, and had become the groundwork of all the sciences.

"Are you of opinion," asked the Prince, "that the categorical imperative of Kant, and the French Revolution, have tended to the same results?"

Bella laid back her head, and looked up into the blue sky. The men were entering upon themes which, in deference to her, ought to be postponed to another time, but she would be patient and listen.

Eric explained that the principle of Kant, "So act that you can wish the rule of your actions to be the rule of all human actions," established the same ideal as the French Revolution, with its equality before the law; there are to be no more privileged classes.

"But does not this equality destroy all greatness, all genius?" asked the Russian.

Bella thought this a good opportunity for breaking her silence, and quickly choosing her side, she added: —

"I would go further, and ask if richly endowed natures do not make new laws in the intellectual and political world, as well as the æsthetic."

Clodwig smiled to hear his wife thus trotting out her hobby-horse, but Eric answered, smilingly, — "That is the miserable mistake for which Jesuitism in the Church, and frivolity in the world, are equally answerable.

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Peculiar natures have been granted by the world, and have come to claim for themselves, certain exceptional privileges and immunities, which, if generally allowed, would be subversive of human society. What are called superior natures have greater responsibilities than others, but no exceptional rights. Before God and the moral sense of humanity, we are all equal, as Christianity exhaustively expresses in the words, 'we are all children of God.' Children are equal before their father. But the Church grants indulgences; the State, rights of primogeniture; sophistry, moral exemptions. No single man of iron will come to establish the new kingdom of equality; the kingdom is at hand; its road is the iron rail, its horse is the steam."

"You speak well; it is a great pleasure to me to have made your acquaintance," said the Prince to Eric. "I pray you to come often to see me; or will you let me come to you?"

Eric, who, in his excitement, had said more than he intended, expressed his thanks, saying at the same time that he must consecrate his time and strength to his pupil. He was angry with himself at thus speaking out his whole heart on every occasion, instead of adopting the light conversational tone of society. He thought he knew what the young noble meant by his compliment. A beautiful way of speaking, indeed! A new dish, a new sauce, new music, charming capriccios! None but a fool would expose the treasures of his heart to them.

Eric was struck with the expression of Bella's face; it was set and hard. What have I done, she thought, that he should read me such a lesson about no one claiming exemption from the rule of morality? She was thoroughly angry, and with difficulty forced a smile to her face. She soon controlled herself, however, and managed to make the two young men enter upon a little passage of arms before her.

The Prince had the advantage of Eric in a knowledge of current events, and in practical experience of the world. Eric readily granted the victory to be on his opponent's side in many instances.

As they were walking in the garden, the Prince leaning familiarly on Eric's arm, he asked if Eric was acquainted with Herr Weidmann, to whom Clodwig intended to send him.

Eric replied that he had only seen him once or twice, but that he was universally esteemed.

"If you should happen to have any friend like yourself," said the Prince, pressing Eric's arm as he spoke, "if you should know any one whom you could recommend to be my guide and instructor, I could make provision for him for life, or — excuse the question — would you yourself perhaps — ?"

Eric declined the honor, but promised to bear the subject of an instructor in mind.

Bella joined them, and Eric walked by the side of the other two, his mind agitated by a variety of emotions. He had pondered so carefully on the best way of drawing himself and Bella back from that dangerous boundary line of friendship, and here his pains had been thrown away, for another already occupied his place. His vanity was secretly wounded that this man of the world, with his prettily-dressed nothings, should at once have become a greater favorite than he with his tiresome solidities and all his historical luggage. At heart he was indignant at Bella's familiarity with the Russian, and a strange confusion of feeling arose within him. Should he be glad to think this woman nothing but a coquette, trifling now with one man and now with another? or did Bella thus act only to make less marked her intimacy with himself, which she desired not to display before others?

His mind was harassed by opposite emotions; one moment he was glad of the lesson he had received, for now he could go back to his work with an unburdened mind; the next he was again angry with himself for his ignorance of the ways of polite society.

The Doctor's arrival changed as usual the current of the conversation. One sharp glance embraced Bella, Eric, and the Russian, and seemed to reveal to him their respective positions. Bella and the Doctor always had a little private warfare going on between them

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CHAPTER V.

A HARSH JUDGMENT.

The Doctor desired Eric to tie his horse to the back of the carriage, and drive with him part way to the villa.

When the two were seated together, the Doctor began, after first puffing out a long breath: —

"A beautiful woman is Countess Bella, and a clever. She loves her parrot, which, apparently, is allowed to fly at liberty in the forest, but must return obediently to his mistress's shoulder."

"Permit me one observation," interrupted Eric. "I have noticed that here in the country, and wherever the society is limited, the conversation is apt to turn upon a third person, and generally — not in your case, perhaps, but in the case of most persons whom I have heard talk — in a not very charitable way. Do you not consider this a proof of narrowness, or whatever else of that nature you may choose to call it?"

The Doctor perceived that Eric was disinclined to pursue this subject, but he nevertheless replied: —

"The human race affords the most abundant material for conversation, and of that race the most inexhaustible matter is furnished by the variety woman. I am not meaning now to speak of Bella, but of myself. I have discovered in this woman an entirely new variety."

"With your permission, honored Herr Doctor, the Countess seems to be in perfect health."

"Did you never know Frau Bella before?"

"But slightly," said Eric reluctantly.

"I, however, knew her well. She made a marriage of convenience, as many others have done, and I think none the worse of her for it. My opinion on such matters differs from that of most men. The Countess is modest as far as her talents are concerned, but is proud of her morality. I happen to know that she told the Count before the betrothal, that she was too insignificant for him, was, in fact, not worthy of him. In regard to intellect, her modesty was sincere, though somewhat exaggeratedly expressed. She has talent, but no soul; she is all seasoning, no solid food. But morally this confession was perfectly true; morality with her is only propriety."

"I must beg you — " interposed Eric.

"And I must beg you," broke in the Doctor, "to let me finish my sentence. Her morality I mean is that of the world, which considers only the outward marriage essential, and knows no relation of marriage save a relation of the outward tie. To Count Clodwig, purity and beauty are a law; every sin against them offends his nature; he could not be guilty of the smallest violation of them, even if no mortal eye should detect it."

In the pause which ensued, Eric's heart beat hard. Was the man describing Clodwig's purity, in order to show him how base would be the slightest approach to injuring or betraying such a friend?

The Doctor continued: —

"A man can receive no higher honor than that of being Clodwig's friend. I do not love the aristocracy; nay, I may even say I hate them; but in this Count Clodwig there is a nobleness which perhaps can only come to perfection through the fostering care of generations, and cannot be fully developed among us commoners, where everything is a fresh conquest smelling of the new varnish, which is always likely to crack away. There is a steady, even temperature about Clodwig, never amounting to a hot blaze, but always a beneficent warmth. You see I have learned from you to make illustrations," he said playfully, then continued, more seriously: —

"His one passion is for rest, which makes it the more remarkable that he should have sacrificed so much of it for your sake. I do not agree with the wicked world in pronouncing Countess Bella to be a very dragon of virtue. On the contrary, she must have every week, or every month at farthest, some fair name to destroy, or, better, some guilty person to use her cat's claws upon; like a well-trained hound, she likes best to attack a poor hare in the eyes; then she is satisfied, perfectly polite and obliging, harming nobody, for she is not really cruel and pitiless. She speaks very kindly of any one so long as he is unfortunate; when people are humbled she readily pardons them; as soon as a man is sick she is most kindly disposed towards him, but as long as he keeps well he need expect nothing but severity from her. She has beautiful and abundant hair, but that does not please her so much as the being able to tell of this woman or that, how many pounds of false hair she wears. If she can say that any woman is scrofulous, she is quite happy; for she would have only the Prankens perfectly sound. Once let her make an assertion, and she never retreats from it; better that her husband, Pranken, the whole world, should be illogical, than that she should be mistaken. Bella von Wolfsgarten never allows herself to be mistaken. She has never worn an unbecoming dress, has never said a word which might not be engraved upon stone. That

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she calls charactor; that she calls strength, — never to confess to a mistake. Let the logic of the whole world go to the devil first! She can make the eggs dance nicely in conversation. Did you ever receive one of her dainty little notes? She can dance even upon paper with the most supple grace."

Eric passed his hand across his brow; he no longer knew where he was. The Doctor threw away a half-smoked cigar, and continued: —

"The wicked world hopes, and, alas! its hopes cannot be fulfilled without stabbing our noble Clodwig to the heart, — it hopes that this dragon of virtue will one day find its unsaintly George. But that would have to be a man whose ambition is, as we say, to be successful with the women; not one to whom the words love, magnanimity, aspiration, are realities, and who could not use them as a cloak for other ends."

Eric knew not what to answer. He clenched his fist to keep himself still, for he felt himself trembling.

The Doctor pulled a string which brought the drag against the wheel; the wagon went creaking and scraping down the hill; they looked over the precipice, at the bottom of which a little brook was babbling over rocks. Such an abyss had opened before Eric. When they were driving again comfortably through the valley, the Doctor resumed: —

"When I say the wicked world, I am not using merely a figure of speech. I must explain to you what this new variety is that I have discovered in Frau Bella. It is this. There have been, and there exist still, many women who are, or who imagine themselves to be, no matter which, very unhappy, or consider themselves very unfortunate because they have such inferior husbands, — men who love horses, dogs, and such like, while they themselves are lofty, unappreciated, ethereal souls. This new variety, however, which Frau Bella represents, is different. She is unhappy because of the greatness of her husband. Had she one of those well-trained puppets which are in the world for the purpose of wearing a court-dress, she might be unhappy, but loftily so; she could look upon herself as a fair flower-crowned victim, suffer with patience, bewail her fate, be on a pinnacle in fact, a being ever debarred from the noblest emotions of the heart. But by the side of the husband she has, she grows constantly more odious, more insignificant. He humiliates her by casting her into the shade; nay, more: by condemning her immature ideas only by a raising of his eyebrows. In fact, — she does not, I think, acknowledge it to herself, — she hates her husband for making solemn earnest of her light trifling with intellectual and moral things; he compels her to acknowledge mistakes and follies, and severely enough is he punished for doing so. I understand now the fable of the Harpies. The modern harpies besmear every noble thought till it becomes unpalatable and nauseous; and thus must Clodwig wrestle and fight for the common daily bread of the spirit. With all this, she is not without nobleness; she likes to help the sick, only is somewhat despotic in recommending her remedies. But do you know what the most dangerous thing about Frau Bella is?"

"Indeed I do not; I cannot imagine what climax you have yet to reach."

"A very simple one. We hear the devil talked about in the churches, but in these days he appears as a very complaisant, very noble and self-sacrificing demon, who comes to us and says, — Here, you are the friend of this woman; avail yourself of her esteem for you, her confidence in you, to put her in the right frame of mind; you must teach her to appreciate her husband, to honor him as he desires to be honored. This sophistical demon seems to be very subtle, but is really the clumsiest of all; for never did one human being learn to value another, least of all, a wife her husband, through a third person's influence. There is a final impulse of life, and a final impulse of love, which must come from the person himself; and where that does not exist, the tongues of angels would be employed in vain. Have you seen the head of Medusa? The ancients esteemed the victory over Medusa to be the greatest achievement of Theseus; she is poisonous beauty. In ancient times she hardened men to stone, in modern, she softens them into effeminacy. I have a special hatred against this Frau Bella; do you know why? Because she makes a hypocrite of me every time I go to Wolfsgarten. I have no business to be so polite as I am to her; and the fact that I am so, out of regard to Clodwig, is no excuse. No one has such a bad effect upon me as this Frau Bella; she makes a hypocrite of me, and she kindles in me such a passion for destruction as I had not thought myself capable of. She is a quack doctress. If I prescribe a medicine, she always knows beforehand what I am going to prescribe. Medicinally I have pretty much broken down her pretensions, but intellectually she has more than ever. She has family medicines and figures of speech at her tongue's end, as if she had been a deep student, whereas the root of

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her whole nature is want of reverence, an impertinent meddling with every subject; for everything is a vain show to her mind; she has no respect even for herself, knowing that she is herself nothing but a vain show. One deep-rooted trait in her is ingratitude. Come what may to her, she will still be ungrateful. If you want to see the exact opposite to Bella, look at the Major, who is grateful for everything, even for the very air he breathes. That old child of a Major is seventy years old, and has not yet lost faith in human goodness. If the devil incarnate were to appear, he would find something good in him; but this Bella is without principle. A man may be evil-minded, and yet have strength and active powers left for the world's service; but an evil-minded woman is wholly evil and only evil. Do you know who would be a fit mate for Frau Bella?"

"I know nothing about it," cried Eric in despair; he felt as if he must jump out of the wagon.

"The only man who would do for her, the only man capable of subduing and governing this whole menagerie which bears the name of Bella, is Herr Sonnenkamp; in fact, there is a secret sympathy between them."

Eric was glad he could laugh; but the Doctor continued:—

"I am a heretic, my young friend; I believe that woman is an inferior variety in the human race. A man can never be so bad as a woman, can never be so hypocritical. For the latter quality, to be sure, women are not responsible, having been taught from childhood that the world cares only for appearances. But the main defect is, that they have no broad humanity; they do not go down to the first principles from which all things start; they regard everything as being sewed and colored, in the same way that their hats and mantillas are by the mantuamakers. On the other hand, they stand under the curse of the beasts: they cannot heartily rejoice with another; slander is a peculiar symptom of blood-thirstiness. Throughout all nature, the female is the cruelest."

Eric sat still and heard all this talked at him. When they arrived at the place where the Doctor was to get out, the good man puffed out another long breath, and said, his face glowing with his earnestness,—

"Now I feel better. I have been choking with this for a long while. Thank you for having listened so patiently. Young friend," he continued, laying his hand kindly on Eric's shoulder, "I am angry with the poets, who, from fear of giving offence to women, have dressed up this clever show-woman. If I have said too much of Frau Bella, as is possible, I yet pray you to keep in mind the truths I have told of her, which I have not exaggerated, and which I am ready any moment to maintain."

Eric took his horse by the bridle, but did not mount; he travelled on, lost in thought. That he should have heard such things against Bella, and should have so poorly defended her, pained him. With a look almost of devotion he gazed upward to the cloudless heaven above him; he would keep himself free from the guilt of palliating his own faults. His heart turned to Roland, and something within him said, I hope from this time to be worthy to educate a human being; for never again shall any criminal trifling with thoughts and feelings have place in me. I was vain; I was pleased at appearing brilliant, at being praised by a handsome woman, at feeling the light touch of her warm glove upon my hand. No such man should dare to say, I will in all purity educate a human being. I hope now I am a man who can.

With a feeling of inward happiness he pursued his way and reached the villa.

A telegram was awaiting him, saying that the family would spend the night in the capital.

Eric was alone.

CHAPTER VI.

A RECEIPT FOR THE FIRST INSTALMENT OF SALARY.

Frau Ceres expressed herself in the morning strongly disinclined to return to the villa. The fête on Rudolph's hill still floated before her fancy, and she wanted to have another just like it to-day. She urged the Cabinetsräthin at least to go back with her to the villa and make her a visit. The invitation was declined, but a visit promised at an early date.

Frau Ceres was so much out of spirits, that to cheer her up Sonnenkamp made Pranken sit in the carriage with her, while he drove with Roland. When he was alone with his son, he questioned him on all kinds of subjects; he even went so far as to ask him how often Eric visited the Countess Bella, and whether they often took walks alone together.

Roland was perplexed.

On the road they overtook the saddle-horses, which had been sent homewards in advance of the party. The horses were wholly enveloped in coverings, so that only

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their eyes and feet were visible. Sonnenkamp ordered a halt to be made; the creatures' great eyes were fixed with a singular expression on their master from under their close coverings. He severely reprimanded one of the grooms, whom he had seen at a distance sitting on one of the horses instead of walking by the animal's side. The next act of disobedience should lose the man his place. As they drove on, Roland made the remark that these horses were better clothed than many men.

Sonnenkamp threw a sidelong glance of surprise at his son, but made no answer.

All at once Roland beckoned to the driver to stop. He had noticed by the road-side the teamster, employed in carting the stone bottles to the mineral-spring, whom he had walked with on that eventful night. Alighting, Roland held out his hand to the man and requested him to tell the hostler, when he met him, that he was innocent; whereupon he resumed his seat in the carriage, the teamster all the while staring after him, while his father desired him to tell him more about the strange rencontre.

Roland related all he knew, not omitting the legend of the laughing sprite; but the story about this sprite seemed to have no effect upon Sonnenkamp's risibles; and when Roland remarked, that he liked to familiarize himself with the life of poor people battling with abject misery, Sonnenkamp whistled the inaudible tune to himself. At the same time, the more Roland talked, the more surprised did his father appear at the mental activity of the lad; and the conversation in the old castle, after Claus had questioned him, was brought back to his mind with strange associations and connections.

Sonnenkamp was inwardly debating what to do. To dismiss Eric on the spot would not answer, on Roland's account; such peremptory dismissal might only make him cling all the more obstinately to his erroneous views and tendencies. Besides, it would be ill-advised to bring about a rupture with Eric, on account of the Cabinetsräthin, especially since she had expressed herself strongly on the point of procuring the assistance of Eric's mother; above all else, however, Clodwig had to be considered, for the connection with Clodwig was not Pranken's, but Eric's work, and Clodwig was the most powerful ally in the execution of the plan.

Sonnenkamp was actuated by a twofold jealousy: the clergy had taken one child from him; this time, a man of the world was on the point of taking away the other. He did not disapprove in direct terms of Eric's ideas, he merely cautioned his son as to there being no need of such utter submission to a paid person, adding that he saw no necessity of his fretting too much about his studies, which might do well enough for people who had to fight their way in life, but certainly not for a young man who required just about knowledge enough to be able to express an opinion of his own. He admonished his son not to allow his life to be disturbed by fantasies; and found it an easy task once more to make the glitter of a soldier's life in the capital appear very attractive to him.

Soon after the first salutations were exchanged, Sonnenkamp enquired of Eric where he had been the day before; putting this question very much like a master, whose servant's time is by right his own, and who is therefore justified in demanding a proper account thereof.

Eric told him of his visit to Wolfsgarten, dwelling more particularly on a description of the Russian prince.

Sonnenkamp smiled; he was pleased to see, that this proud virtue knew so well how to hide his deviations from the straight path.

Roland was evidently inclined to break through the strict discipline which Eric had introduced, and which he himself had re-established; whenever he stayed through a lesson he looked sullen, the instigations of his father beginning to show their effect. A glance at Eric frequently would show the latter, that Roland almost looked upon him as his jailor. Hitherto Roland had only seen things with Eric's eyes, and regarded whatever happened to him as if he were expected to accept it for Eric's sake; all this was now at an end. In the dim distance still resounded the notes of martial music and the laughter of military officers conversing gaily.

Eric could not but notice this change in his pupil; it made him feel sad. He could devote all his energy to Roland. Roland received it much against his will; and since he no longer hesitated to manifest his displeasure, his ill-humor of old returned and revived. Again and again the hardship of a tutor's profession presented itself to Eric's mind. He lived the past over again. In his garrison, when off duty, he had lived quietly by himself; at the parental home he was allowed to indulge in his own fancies, his mother having been habituated by his father to the belief, that she ought to wait quietly to be spoken to, inasmuch as learned men ought not to be disturbed in their reflections; and Eric had been treated in the same way: he was

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never disturbed, and was left entirely to his own thoughts. Now, however, at table, or while out driving, he had to answer the numerous queries of both pupil and father, who were fond of asking questions, and having intricate ones solved for them. For a long, long time, he had been accustomed to an independent life, devoted to his own mental improvement; now, however, it seemed to him as if, together with his state of servitude, he were losing himself, as if he were but the shadow of his former past, and nothing new nor fresh was stirring in him, while all his former thoughts and feelings appeared to require a forcible awakening. Eric mourned over his mental decline. Formerly he had hardly dared to confess to himself, that he had derived new animation and pleasure from being near Bella—and that was to cease henceforth. What then remained for him?

He stood aghast at perceiving, that the whole sanctity of his inner self had been staked on another being, and a new revelation came to him, which made Sonnenkamp's dissatisfaction, as well as that of his pupil, appear as a just penalty. He redoubled his zeal, but in vain.

An event, seemingly trifling, and of a surprising nature, brought the disturbing elements to a crisis. Sonnenkamp paid Eric the first instalment of his salary in Roland's presence, looking all the while triumphantly at his son. Eric trembled, but quickly recovered his self-control. He took the gold and advanced a step or two towards the window at which Roland was standing. Sonnenkamp supposed, for a moment, that he was going to throw the gold out of the window, but Eric said, in a tone of forced composure: —

"Roland, take my pay and carry the money to my room. There you may wait for me."

Roland took the gold, looking confusedly at his father and Eric.

"Do me the favor of carrying that gold to my room," repeated Eric. "And now go." Roland went. He carried the money as if it were a heavy burden, and repaired to Eric's room, where he deposited it on the table. He then turned to go, when the thought suddenly occurred to him, that he ought also to watch it; he was on the point of locking the room, when he remembered, that Eric had ordered him to wait for his coming. He stood there, while everything seemed to be whirling around. What had happened?

Suddenly Pranken came in to bid him good-bye. He congratulated Roland upon his speedy deliverance from Eric. Then only did he realize what had happened, and what was to follow. Pranken referred slightingly to Eric, as to a man to whom he might make certain concessions from sheer pity. Merrily he bade Roland farewell. After he had gone, Roland felt that he could no longer have any love for Pranken, and realized a sense of loss; he quietly remained standing at the table, looking down upon the money before him. In a childlike way he began to count the sum Eric had received. For what length of time had he received it? He could not make it out, and turned angrily aside to look out of the window. Behind him on the table lay the money; he felt as if somebody near him were whispering all the time: Forget me not!

Meanwhile Eric was still in the room with Sonnenkamp, who, with an air of great astonishment, said,—

"You are wantonly destroying all attachment between us."

Eric replied, that he might perhaps have chosen a more appropriate time, and that nothing but the manner in which he had been paid had compelled him to act as he had done.

"Have I hurt your feelings?"

"I am not very sensitive. I appreciate money as far as it deserves to appreciated and am always pleased at receiving my honest wages. I am inclined to think that I love your son more than—no matter! there is no standard to measure love by, — it can only be measured by itself."

"I am obliged to you."

"I beg your pardon, sir; allow me to finish my sentence. Just because I love your son, I prefer to have the blame fall upon me rather than upon his father."

"Upon me?"

"Yes, sir. I might have paid you back for the way in which you paid me off in my pupil's presence; I might have told you that free labor — I abstain from using the word love, and simply confine myself to refer to such work as one man will do freely for another — can never be paid. I suppressed my feelings, because I wished that your son should love and respect you more than he does other people, than even myself."

Sonnenkamp clenched his fists. He stared at Eric for awhile, but soon looked down; he had to exert great self-control in order not to betray that he trembled.

At last he said,—

"I don't know what you mean by some expressions you have used, and I don't want to know. But I am the man to put a bullet through the forehead of him who attempts ——"

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"I very readily comprehend your excitement," said Eric, quietly straightening himself up and looking Sonnenkamp coolly in the face.

"Who are you? Who am I?" asked Sonnenkamp, while his features were strangely distorted.

"I am your son's tutor, and I know the accountableness of my position; I am in your service; this is your house, you can turn me out of it at once."

"I will not do that — not that! Have I said that I would? I must only explain myself to you, and you must explain yourself to me. Have you not said to Roland that the time will come, or has already come, when there would no longer be any private property?"

Eric assured him that he had not the remotest purpose of doing anything of the kind; he was sorry that he made use of the illustration, and regretted Roland's misconception.

"Let us sit down," said Sonnenkamp, his knees trembling. "Let us talk calmly, like reasonable men, like friends, if I may be allowed to say so."

He whistled to himself, and then said, in a wholly different tone,—

"I must tell you, that irrespective of this mistake, your whole tone of thought seems to me dangerous to my son. You seem to me, in fact, a philanthropist, and I honor that; you are one of those persons who would like to thank every common laborer in the road for his toil, and pay him also as much as possible. You see I believe your philanthropy is genuine, and not taken up merely for the sake of popularity. But this philanthropy — I speak without any disguise — is not the thing for my son. My son will have, at some time, a princely income; and if a rich man must go through life in this way, always looking around to see where there is poverty, where there is not adequate compensation, he would be condemned to greater wretchedness than the beggar in the ditch. The worst thing that could be done to my son would be to make him sentimental, or even pitiful and compassionate. I am not one of those men, and I would not have my son to be one, who are eternally longing after the ineffable, and, as I believe, unattainable; I want for myself and for my son a practical enjoyment of existence. Believe me, a contraband-trade will be driven in feelings, if one persuades himself that men in lower conditions have the same susceptibilities that we have."

"I thank you," replied Eric, "for this straightforward plainness of speech, and I am glad that you have given me the opportunity to tell you that I have endeavored to make Roland good-hearted, but not weak-hearted. He is to comprehend the goodly advantages of his life, so that he may receive and make his own the noblest and the highest; he is to be a noble administrator of the grand power that is to be put into his hands."

Eric unfolded this more in detail, and Sonnenkamp, extending his hand to him, said,—

"You are — you are — a noble man, you have also to be my educator. Forget what has happened. I trust you now, unconditionally. I confide in you, that you will not alienate from me the heart of my child, that you will not make him a soft-hearted helper of everybody and everything."

Sonnenkamp jerked these words out forcibly, for he inwardly chafed, that this man, whom he wanted to humble, had humbled him, so that he was compelled to stand before him like a beggar, entreating a stranger not to alienate from him the heart of his child.

"Why," — he at last began again, "I pray you, I only ask for information, for I am convinced that you have good grounds for every such step," — a spiteful glance, notwithstanding all his guarded discretion, gleamed forth at this question — "I only ask for information, why you have restrained Roland from making a free use of his purse, as, since my return, I have been informed is the case."

"I cannot give definite reasons for all my doings, but I have a valid one for this. Roland lavishes and squanders money, and he does it ignorantly and wantonly, while I consider the control of money a part of self-control."

And now Eric informed Sonnenkamp what an impression the robbery had made upon Roland. Exultantly Sonnenkamp cried out:—

"I am rejoiced that he has found out so early how completely one is surrounded in the world by knaves; he will be cautious whenever he comes to manage his own affairs. Yes, Herr Philosopher, write down in your books: The one trait in which man surpasses the brutes is, that man is the only animal who can dissemble and can lie. And the sooner and the more perfectly my son can know that fact, so much the better am I pleased. I should be very glad if Roland had been through the second grade of schools."

"The second grade?"

"Yes; the first is, to bestow benefits upon people, and then to get an insight into their rascality; the second is, to play games of

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chance, believing that one can make any gain thereby. Debts of beneficence and debts of the gaming-table are not very willingly paid."

There was a certain fatherly tone in Sonnenkamp's voice, as he praised Eric's transcendental benevolent intents, at the same time warning him of the baseness of the whole brood of human creatures. His fundamental maxim was, that man is a wolf to his fellow-man.

When Eric came to Roland, the latter stretched out both his hands to him.

"I thank you," cried the boy, "for treating me as my father treated you; yes, I will have nothing more to do with money. I beseech you, forgive my father for paying you like a servant."

Eric had great difficulty in making an explanation to the boy, so as not to disturb and bewilder his natural feelings and perceptions. The son must preserve love and respect for his father.

"Put away the gold," Roland entreated. Eric immediately put it away out of sight, for he saw how it annoyed the youth.

"Give me something," he then besought.

"I have nothing to give," answered Eric. "But you will know henceforth, that one human being can give something to another which is of more value than all the gold in the world; we will both hold fast the proverb: A friend who can desert you was never your friend."

Roland kissed the hand which had received the gold. Eric was opposed to all sentimentality, but here he had witnessed the opening of a flower, and had inhaled its earliest fragrance, and this flower was a youth's heart.

"We will go and see the Major," said Roland at last; it was evident that he wanted to be with some person who had nothing to do with all this perplexity, and simply lived his own quiet life.

They went to the Major's, but did not find him in. They walked for a long time together, until after dark, without speaking a word.

Sonnenkamp also walked about the park in the silent night, inwardly chafing at the thought that there was always something to conceal, for a single expression of Eric's that day had awakened a powerful struggle within him. That expression was, free labor. And then he began to wonder how it had happened that he had allowed himself to do anything to wound Eric, while it was still his intention to send for his mother. It produced a thrill of satisfaction in him, when he thought how infinitely charitable people would consider that. If he himself could only have believed that it was true charity! But he knew what his own object really was. No matter! If the world believes in the noble and kindly, that is enough. She who is rouged knows that she has not red cheeks, but she takes pleasure in the thought that the world believes she has, and she is gay and girlish.

Sonnenkamp had desired that Pranken should purchase the neighboring villa which they wished to sell to the Cabinetsräthin. Pranken had declined to do it in a friendly manner, and for good reasons, that it would seem a natural measure for Sonnenkamp to take, in order to secure a good neighbor. Sonnenkamp did not know whether to hope or fear that Pranken had already taken measures beforehand, and thereby made a profit for himself. Was he to be over-reached? But it would be fine if his son-in-law had such a prudent eye to his own advantage.

Sonnenkamp did not concern himself much the next few days with house or garden, with Roland or Eric; he visited the country-house, offered to purchase the vineyards appertaining to it, and became completely convinced that Pranken had taken no steps in the matter. He was well satisfied to acknowledge to himself that he had not been thoroughly acquainted with the nature of the nobility; Pranken was a man who would have nothing to do with any clandestine methods of gaining a pecuniary profit.

The Wine-count was his principal competitor for the country-house offered for sale; it was said he wanted to purchase it for his son-in-law, the son of the Marshal of the Prince's household. Sonnenkamp closed the bargain immediately.

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CHAPTER VII.

NOT EASILY DIGESTED BY ONE OF THE GUESTS.

If Claus had heard in prison that Sonnenkamp had bought another country-house, he would certainly have exclaimed, —

"Yes, indeed. Of course he'll buy up the whole Rhineland yet." But he learned nothing of it.

The legal inquiry was protracted, and the Judge was sufficiently well disposed to draw up new papers for the interrogation of Eric and Roland at the villa; yet this unpleasant occurrence interrupted the course of instruction more than one could have believed.

Entertainments also were not wanting, for Roland one day announced to Eric: —

"Count Wolfsgarten is to give a grand fête; father and mother are rejoiced; and you and I are also invited."

Sonnenkamp was very well satisfied with Pranken for having brought this about; Eric's coöperation was no longer of any account. It was settled with Pranken, that Clodwig, who was the most influential member of the Committee for conferring nobility, should be gained over to favor the object now exclusively occupying their attention, and induced to take actively the initiative.

Sonnenkamp stood before his armory, and before the large money-safe built into the walls; here were many potent agencies, but they were of no help in this matter, where personal influence alone availed. He was despondent for a short time; then he proudly drew himself up, thinking that he had already succeeded in other undertakings, and here also there would not be wanting to him the requisite means.

He had a severe contest with Frau Ceres on the day they were to go to the fete; she wanted to wear all her jewelry to dinner, and even Fräulein Perini could not divert her from her purpose, by representing how irrefragably settled it was that no diamonds should be worn by daylight. Frau Ceres wept like a little child, and she preferred to remain at home if this pleasure was begrudged her.

Sonnenkamp entreated her to dress plainly, and not annoy the Countess by wearing jewels worth twenty times what she herself possessed; and it was promised her, that at the next fete given at the house, she might appear in full costume.

But Frau Ceres persisted in saying that she would not accompany them if she could not wear her jewels.

"Well, then," said Sonnenkamp, "I will send a messenger to Wolfsgarten immediately, to inform them that you will remain at home."

He had a groom sent for at once, and gave him orders to saddle a horse, in order to ride immediately to Wolfsgarten. He went off. Frau Ceres' look followed him with a very angry glance; she was then the miserable child who must remain at home, when all the rest were going to the fete. After a time, she hastened to Sonnenkamp's room, and announced that she would go with them in the way they desired.

Sonnenkamp regretted that he had already sent the messenger off, and now Frau Ceres besought him, with tears, to send a second messenger announcing her coming. Sonnenkamp asserted that this was no longer possible, but finally yielded. He went himself to the stables, and had nothing further to do than to say to the groom, —

"Take off the saddle!" for he had not sent him away, knowing that Frau Ceres would, after a while, beseech him like a child.

They drove to Wolfsgarten. Frau Bella was extremely glad to be able to welcome the Cabinetsräthin; she was very amiable, and looked to-day lovelier than ever. She had a friendly word for everybody, and she was especially gracious to Eric. She thought that, at his last visit, he seemed to be a little out of tune, and she wished now to dissipate any such feeling by exhibiting a decided preference.

Eric received the friendly attention gratefully, but very coldly, as the sharp-eyed woman did not fail to perceive.

Sonnenkamp, who had quick perception, held his breath as a hunter does, when the game comes within range of his shot. Indeed, thought he, they know how to play a good game! The reputation of this house for virtue had hitherto weighed upon him somewhat, but now he moved about with a sort of home feeling.

It was a little court assembled here, and the etiquette, though savoring of rural freedom, was not the less precise. A large number of prominent personages were collected, and the fact was the more striking, because they were brought together from scattered points of country life; it was a group of separate and independent individuals drawn hither from their retirement. The larger portion were officers who had retired on pensions, or been honorably discharged from the service; there were red, yellow, and blue ribbons of different orders modestly tied in the button-holes; the old gentlemen had their hair carefully dressed, and their beards freshly colored;

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the ladies showed that they had sojourned at Paris some weeks in the year to some purpose.

The conversation was carried on in French, out of regard to a French lady.

A celebrated musician had also been invited, now staying at the country-house of a brother-artist, who had married a former music-pupil, a rich heiress, and had gained a highly respectable standing in the neighborhood.

Except Eric, Herr Sonnenkamp and the musical-artist were the only untitled personages in the company; his genius raised the artist, and his millions the rich man, into the new atmosphere. The Wine-cavalier might already be considered as one of the nobility, for it was known that his whole family were to be ennobled very soon. The newly betrothed couple had also been invited, but on the day of the fete, a letter was received which contained the information, couched in courteous terms of regret, that the bridegroom, having been taken slightly ill, was unable to be present, and the bride had therefore remained at home. No one of the Wine-count's family made his appearance, except the Wine-cavalier, who expressed in renewed terms regret for the indisposition of his future brother-in-law.

A famous portrait-painter was also present, who had been for several weeks at the country-house of the Wine-count in order to paint life-size portraits of the betrothed couple. He was very much the fashion, and was very successful in pearls, lace, and gray satin, and also in faces, except that they all had a strong tinge of blue; but he was very popular with the court, and there could be no question but that he was the only man to paint the distinguished bride.

The Russian Prince was, of course, a star of the first magnitude. Sonnenkamp occupied the place of honor next to Frau Bella, and on the other side sat the Prince. Clodwig had Frau Ceres by his side, and the Major was very naturally seated next, as an efficient ally. Clodwig entertained Frau Ceres in a very friendly way, and she ate freely to-day, out of embarrassment, without Sonnenkamp's intervention.

Sonnenkamp had brought into play his old weapons of gallantry, but he seemed to have no success, for Bella did not half listen to him, giving much of her attention to the conversation of Eric with the Russian.

All at once the conversation between different individuals ceased, as the Prince asked Herr Sonnenkamp, —

"Do they also designate the slaves in America as souls?"

"I do not understand your meaning."

"I mean that in Russia we designate the serfs as souls: a man is said to have so many hundred or thousand souls; and do they call them so in America too?"

"No."

"It is questioned indeed," interposed Clodwig, "whether the niggers really have souls. Humboldt relates that the savages have the notion that apes also can speak, but that they purposely refrain from doing so, because they are afraid that they also shall be compelled to work if it is known that they can speak."

A general laugh proceeded from the company at table, and Clodwig added, —

"If we dig up the smallest vessel belonging to the Greek and Roman age, we discover always some sort of beauty; but, so far as I am acquainted, the niggers have never embodied a single new beautiful form."

"Neither have they," interposed the Prince, "as has been said, ever invented even a mouse-trap!"

"Not even that," replied Clodwig. "The question comes up, whether the negroes can be inheritors of civilization, for they are not inheritors of the beautiful human form as it has been handed down to us from Egypt, Greece, and Rome, and so cannot become cultivators of the plastic arts; and art alone is the ennobler of humanity. They cannot create the beautiful after their likeness; and as it is said, 'God made man after his image,' so man fashions his gods after his own likeness, which the negroes cannot do. Perhaps in the coming time they will create something for themselves, but not for others; and they are therefore not partakers of the inheritance, for they are not included in the great human brotherhood, which is not to be entered by force."

Sonnenkamp looked up; his whole countenance expanded. This is the utterance of a man whose love of humanity is not to be questioned.

"That is a fact!" he interposed. "There is no sentimentalism in America: our plain common-sense views are declared heterodox indeed by pedantic wisdom, and branded as inhumanity, but there is a priesthood of so-called humanity; and it has its inquisition as well as the other priesthood."

Sonnenkamp spoke with a concentrated scorn, with a repelling violence, which clearly showed how unsuitable he considered the topic introduced by the Prince, although he had done it in a most civil manner. Clodwig thought that he ought to come to his assistance, and he began in a low tone but became more animated as he went on.

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"Whoever considers historical facts with coolness and impartiality sees that the Idea is continually unfolding, working long in stillness, but without cessation; and this silent working goes on, until some unexpected fact which has nothing in common with the Idea brings it into clear light and perfect development. The Idea only prepares the way by setting the tune; the fact is irrefragable, and performs an actual part."

Bella said something in a low tone to the Prince on her right, but Clodwig was well aware that it was meant for an apology for his somwehat heavy and abstract statement; with a hardly perceptible twinge of his face, and his lips drawn somewhat pointedly together, he resumed: —

"I am of the conviction, that without Sebastopol the emancipation of the peasants would not have been brought about, and in the way it has been; and who knows when and how it could have been accomplished in any other way? Saul goes forth to-day, as of old, to look for an ass, and finds a kingdom, — the kingdom of a regal, all-powerful Idea. The Crimean war was undertaken for the purpose of humiliating Russia, and it brought Russia to the measure of establishing a free peasantry, and renewing herself in her inner life. These are the great facts of history, and they are not our doing."

"That is new to me, surprisingly new," interposed the Prince, while Clodwig continued: —

"The Russian ambassador informed me that during the Crimean war the rumor was spread — no one knew its origin, and yet it was in all mouths — that every one who had fought at Sebastopol, or who had volunteered for the war to deliver the Emperor from the Allies, should have land given him as a free present at its conclusion. This was a fixed notion in all brains, and where did it come from? The idea of the emancipation of the serfs, which had been mooted for a long time in books and journals and among the higher classes of the community, now took deep hold of the imagination, and assumed a definite form in the consciousness of the people, becoming a fact plain as day, that required only the imperial decree to set its seal upon it."

Clodwig stopped, as if wearied, but he summoned up his strength afresh and cried:

"This is the old grand saying: 'the swords shall be turned into ploughshares.'"

The entire company looked at each other with surprise, not understanding why and how Clodwig had fallen into such a strain; Eric alone gazed at Clodwig with a beaming countenance. As a hand was placed upon his shoulder, he looked round, startled. Roland, standing behind him, said, —

"That is exactly what you once said to me."

"Sit down, and be quiet," said Eric. Roland went to his seat, but he waited until he caught Eric's eye, and then drank to him.

Bella looked around, as if wanting help to start some subject more befitting table-talk: she looked at Eric, and nodded to him, as if beseeching him to divert the conversation from these detestable matters.

Just then the servants poured out some Johannisberg in delicate pretty glasses, and Eric said, holding the glass up before him, —

"Herr Count, such wine as this the old nations never drank out of those stone jars which we have dug up from the ground."

Bella nodded to him cheeringly, but as he said nothing further, she asked, —

"Have we any precise information about the ancient method of cultivating the vine?"

"Very little," replied Eric. "The ancients probably had no notion of this bouquet, this spirit of the wine, for they drank it only unfermented."

"I am very far," interposed Sonnenkamp, "from laying any claim to classical lore, but it is very easily seen, that without the cutting of the vines there can be no maturing and full concentration of the sap in the clusters; and without the cask there can be no mellow and perfectly ripe wine."

"Without the cask? Why the cask?" asked the Russian. "Does the wood of the cask serve to clarify the wine?"

"I think not," answered Sonnenkamp, "but the wooden cask allows the air to penetrate, allows the wine to become ripe in the vaults, allows it to work itself pure, — in a word, to come to perfection. In vessels of clay the wine is suffocated, or, at best, experiences no change."

With great address, Bella added, — "That delights me; now I see that a progressive culture contributes to higher enjoyment even of the products of nature."

Sonnenkamp was highly pleased; he was here able to add something interesting, and he appeared in a very favorable light. Then the conversation was carried on between different individuals.

There was general cheerfulness and hilarity, and every painful impression seemed to have passed away: their faces glowed, and their eyes shone brightly, as the company arose from the table.

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CHAPTER VIII.

HELP YOURSELF.

THE gentlemen sat by themselves in the garden, taking coffee after the ladies had withdrawn.

The Prince, who wanted to show manifest friendliness towards Sonnenkamp, spoke of his intention to travel in America, and Clodwig encouraged it, regretting that he had not done so in his youth.

"I think that he who has not been in America does not know what man is when he gives himself the reins: life there awakens entirely new energies in the soul, and in the midst of the struggle for worldly possessions, each one becomes a sort of Robinson Crusoe, who must develop in himself new resources. I should say that America has some points of comparison with Greece: in Greece the body was exhibited naked, and in America the soul. This is by no means the most attractive sight, but a renewal of humanity may yet be the result."

The Musician, who was about to make a professional journey to America, remarked, —

"I don't see how they live in a land whose soil grows no wine, and in whose air sings no lark."

"Allow me one question, Herr Count," Eric now said. "It is striking that they have been able to invent no new names in America, but have taken from the aboriginal inhabitants, and from the immigrants out of the old world, their names for rivers, mountains, towns, and men; and I would here like to ask,—has the new world succeeded in adding a new ethical principle to those already established?"

"Certainly," interposed Sonnenkamp, "the best that there is going."

"The best! What is it?"

"The two significant words, — 'Help yourself.'"

Shaking his head, Clodwig said,—

"Strictly speaking, 'Help yourself' is not a human, but an animal principle; for every beast helps himself with all his powers. This maxim was only justifiable as a protest against a polished and hollow conventionalism, or against that utter abandonment of individual effort in demanding every thing from the State. 'Help yourself' is a good motto for an immigrant, but as soon as he becomes a settler, he stands in relations of rights and duties as regards others. In the far west of America, 'Help yourself' does not apply, for there the neighbors help each other a great deal. 'Help yourself' is of avail, at farthest, for individuals by themselves, and not for those assembled in a community: the serfs could not help themselves, and the slaves have not been able to help themselves. The moral law of solidarity is,— 'Help thy neighbor, as thy neighbor is to help thee; and when thou helpest thyself, thou helpest also others.'"

Here they came upon the subject so happily turned aside at table, but as no one seemed disposed to resume it, Clodwig continued, —

"It would seem that every people must become adopted as a citizen in the great realm of history, through some idea. I believe that the grand calling of America is, to annihilate slavery from the face of the earth. But as I said before, this is the carrying out of an idea that has been for a long time maturing. I should like to ask if America has any new moral principle?"

"Perhaps the sewing-machine is a new moral principle," said Pranken, in his free, joking manner.

They laughed.

"But there *is* a moral principle involved in 'Help yourself,'" interposed Eric. "Among us Europeans, a man becomes something through inheritance, or through royal favor, while the American looks for nothing from others, and seeks to become what he can be through his own efforts, and not through any foreign help. And in respect to that belief which regards man as a pack of merchandise, to be forwarded by some agent to its heavenly destination, this maxim, 'Help yourself,' is very significant. Thou, man, art no coffer, well corded with legal prescriptions, and sealed by the spiritual officers of customs as having paid the duty and passed inspection, but thou art a living passenger on this earth, and must look out for thyself. Help yourself! Nobody forwards thee to thy destination; and we Germans have a proverb that comes near it in meaning: 'Each one must carry his own hide to market.'"

"May I ask a question?" said Roland, entering into the conversation.

All were surprised, especially Eric and Sonnenkamp.

"Ask it if you wish," Eric said encouragingly.

"When I heard the Herr Count speaking of the heritage of civilization, I felt as if I must ask: how do we know that we are civilized?"

The youth spoke with timidity, and Eric encouraged him.

"Explain more fully what you mean by that."

"Perhaps the Turks or the Chinese consider *us* barbarous."

"You would have, then," Eric said, to

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help him on, "some unmistakable token whereby a people, an age, a religion, a man, can perceive whether they are in the great current of universal, historical civilization?"

"Yes, that is what I mean."

"Well, then, consider wherein does a cultivated man differ from an uncultivated?"

"He differs from him in having good thoughts and clear views."

"Where does he get these?"

"Out of himself."

"And how does he learn to sharpen them, and to round them off?"

"By comparing them."

"With what?"

"With the thoughts of great men."

"And does he perceive truth in agreement with others, or in opposition to them?"

"In agreement with them."

"And where do those live with whom he is in agreement?"

"All around him."

"Have not others lived before him?"

"Certainly."

"And can we compare our thoughts and views with those men who have lived before us, or learn directly from the past?"

"Certainly; that is what writings are for."

"Good! And if now a man, or a people, has a system or a culture which has no connection with the past, with no man and no people who have gone before, what is he?"

"No inheritor."

"I did not expect that answer, but I accept it; good! Then is a people, that invents no culture, in connection with humanity, or in a condition of isolation?"

"Of isolation."

"This is the way it stands, then. We know that we are in the centre, or rather in the advancing front, of a progressive civilization, because we have received an inheritance from the Past, from Persians, Jews, Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans, and we transmit it. The Turks and Chinese, who are not able to do this, stand by themselves and so decline. It is not pride which causes us Germans to consider ourselves in the front rank of civilization, for there is no nation that takes up more fully into itself, and carries on farther, the work of humanity than the German, or, we will say, the Germanic, for your father-land is also included."

"Bravo! bravo!" cried Clodwig, as they all rose. Clodwig went to Sonnenkamp and said, —

"Never was a recommendation better justified than mine of the Captain to you; and you are in the right, Herr Sonnenkamp. I have learned something, — 'Help yourself' *is* a grand new principle: it is not a moral principle, but a preceptive formula. See how our friend teaches your son preeminently to help himself: this is the new Socratic method."

Eric and Roland had become now the central objects of the company; and the Prince, coming up to Eric and shaking hands with him, said, —

"You are really a teacher!"

A messenger came from the ladies to say that they would repair to the saloon, and the gentlemen went there in cheerful mood. The jovial Austrian officer, who had elevated to the nobility the daughter of a merchant in the neighboring commercial city, sang some comic songs; Pranken was prevailed upon to exhibit some sleight-of-hand tricks which he had learned from a juggler, and he did it in capital style; and finally, the musician played some tunes upon Clodwig's old violin.

Sonnenkamp embraced the favorable opportunity of speaking to Clodwig, as they were sitting together in a retired nook of the large saloon; he began with speaking of the interest which Roland was so fortunate as to excite in Clodwig, and he very readily acknowledged how great his interest was. Sonnenkamp felt his way along very cautiously, and there was an affecting, paternal tone in the manner in which he said that he had nothing more to desire in life for himself, and that his only wish was to have Roland established securely in an honorable position. Clodwig said he had no doubt that he had gained, and would continue to gain still further, by intercourse with Eric and by his instruction, a knowledge of life, and an introduction into it which would make him strong in himself, and insure at some time admittance into the society of the nobility.

Sonnenkamp fastened upon this expression, "the society of the nobility;" he had not studied in vain the natural history of bribery, and Clodwig must be won over by being made one of the nominating committee, and be bribed by the payment of shares in the new fancy-stock; but Clodwig conducted himself as if he had no idea what Sonnenkamp was aiming at. Sonnenkamp was so confused by this, that instead of requesting directly Clodwig's aid in accomplishing his purpose, he asked his advice; Clodwig discouraged him very decidedly, even saying plainly that it was not expedient to unite one's self with a dying institution, in which one would not feel at home. Sonnenkamp expressed gratefully his sense of obligation. Clodwig seized a favorable

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opportunity to mingle among the guests, and Sonnenkamp could not again get possession of him.

They drove home in the bright daylight, the host and hostess accompanying them a part of the way. Sonnenkamp let Roland take a seat with his mother and Fräulein Perini, for he did not want to encounter the displeasure of his wife, who had stared frequently at Bella's splendid pearl necklace; he took Eric and the Major with him into the carriage.

"This, then, is German society! In our worthy host there is a good deal of the professor," said Sonnenkamp. No one made any reply.

He then said in English to Eric, that he deserved great praise for his tact, that in the presence of Roland, who was still so young, he put so reserved a face on his friendship for Clodwig and his beautiful wife. And he said, placing his hand on Eric's shoulder, —

"Young man, I could envy you; I know very well that you will deny all, but I congratulate you. The old gentleman is right; 'Help yourself' is no moral principle."

Eric could not positively assert the groundlessness of this insinuation, and he felt himself severely punished, by this inward condemnation, for having been guilty even in the slightest passing thought; and it was consolatory to him to be able to say: I can apply it to myself, I have tested the worth of 'Help yourself.'

Sonnenkamp also had his reflections upon the words, 'Help yourself,' and he was vexed at them. He was now seeking to attain something, and self-help could avail nothing in his efforts, but he must accept the help of others. He wished now to acquire an elevated position, and this is a very different thing from the acquisition of money, land, property, and goods; honor proceeds only from persons united by a social bond, and therefore others must help; and the noblest and most influential one, whose aid was essential, was reserved, and disinclined to render him assistance. It did not seem as if Clodwig could be won over to take his part.

CHAPTER IX.

THE WREATH.

Repeated distractions broke in at short intervals on the course of study; but Frau Ceres was made happy by an opportunity to wear all her ornaments, and Fräulein Perini was happy in opening the trunk which arrived from Paris; there could not be more than two such dresses in the world, of which the Empress had one, and Frau Ceres the other.

The old and highly respected family of the Wine-count had until now held back with unmistakable reserve from any intimate acquaintance with the family at Villa Eden, but now, after the dinner-party at Wolfsgarten, Sonnenkamp received an invitation to the wedding festival of their daughter and the son of the Court Marshal.

Eric had great difficulty in restraining his pupil from talking constantly about this great fête, for Roland had heard of the fireworks which were to be sent up from the Rhine and the wooded hills around, and every morning he said, "I do hope the weather will continue pleasant; it will be such a pity if it doesn't." He was often away with Pranken for several hours at a time, and returned very much excited, evidently keeping some secret from Eric, who did not ask any questions.

On the day of the fete, the General with whom the family had become acquainted in the capital arrived.

It was mid-day when they started, in three carriages, for the house of the Wine-count. Frau Ceres occupied one carriage with the General. She seemed to swim in a stream of drapery, so full and spreading were the folds of her dress. In the second and open carriage rode Sonnenkamp with Fräulein Perini and Pranken, in full uniform and wearing two orders. He accompanied them in order to make his appearance as a member of Sonnenkamp's family. Sonnenkamp said nothing, but his face showed how grateful he was to the young man, who had not only brought him the General as a guest, but was taking upon himself his introduction to the assemblage. In the third carriage sat Roland with Eric, who did very wrong, Roland thought, not to wear his uniform also.

A long line of carriages waited before the door of the Wine-count's villa, which stood broad and stately, on the high road, with well-arranged, shady grounds on each side. The General gave Frau Ceres his arm, and they were shown, by servants in rich livery, to the garden, through paths bordered with carefully-tended, fragrant flowers. At the foot of the garden steps the Wine-count met them, and begged the General to resign Frau Ceres to his care. Various groups were walking about the garden, or sitting on the pleasant grass-plots.

The Wine-count's wife, a tall, stout woman, had not heard in vain that she looked like the Empress Maria Theresa. She was dressed to-day quite in her imperial style, and wore a splendid diadem of brilliants.

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Sonnenkamp was presented to the bridal pair. The bridegroom looked very weary, but the bride, with her wreath of roses, very animated; much regret was expressed that Manna was not with the family at the fete.

The Court Marshal expressed his pleasure at meeting Herr Sonnenkamp again, and at making the acquaintance of his wife and of his handsome son, of whom he had heard so much. A glow was thrown over the whole evening, when he said rather loudly, with evident intention, that Sonnenkamp had been most honorably mentioned at the Prince's table, on the preceding day. Frau Ceres, still wearing her white cape over her richly ornamented dress, was seated next the Court marshal.

The Wine-chevalier, wearing several orders, was moving about among the company. He was a man of good manners, having been in constant intercourse with all the aristocracy of Europe. In the time of Napoleon, when he was a jovial travelling agent for his father's firm, he had been employed by the wary Metternich on several missions, which he had carried through with much skill. There was scarcely a French General whom he had not known, and he had even conversed twice with Napoleon himself.

The Wine-count had three sons and three daughters; the oldest daughter was already married to an officer of noble family. Of the three sons, one had disappeared in America, after having squandered large sums of money for his father; the second was a member of a theatre orchestra in a capital of middle Germany, and it was said he had written to his father that, for his part, he would not be ennobled. The third and oldest son was the Wine-chevalier, who had striven very eagerly for the honor of nobility, and was very happy in his success.

The Wine-count was most cordial in his manner; there was a remarkable elasticity in the movements of the slender, white-haired old man. He went from guest to guest, with an appropriate friendly word for each, and on all sides received double congratulations, for on this very day the Prince had ennobled him. He expressed his thanks very modestly, for he could assure himself that he might have attained this honor two years before, but at that time there was a certain patriotic vertigo abroad which had seized even a wine-grower. He answered all the congratulations by saying that the Prince's great kindness made him extremely happy.

Sonnenkamp kept smiling to himself, looking forward to the time when he would thus be courted also, and he prepared to receive the homage with modest thankfulness.

Frau Ceres sat in much discomfort next the Court Marshal, who left her to her own thoughts when he found that no conversation could be kept up. At last a pleasure came to her when the Cabinet minister's lady arrived, and expressed great pleasure at meeting her, as the Court Marshal gave his seat to her.

Still greater was Frau Ceres' happiness when Frau Bella also came up; even in this circle, where there were many of her equals, she seemed to take a leading position. She was very gracious to Frau Ceres, and begged her to take her arm to go into the garden-saloon, where the rich outfit of the bride was exhibited; there was a universal expression of admiration, and some glances of envy from those who returned from its examination.

Frau Ceres managed her long train very awkwardly, while Bella held hers up gracefully, and moved as if she were sailing through light clouds.

Sonnenkamp was greeted by the Russian Prince in a most friendly manner, and delighted at his shaking hands with him; but his pleasure was soon strewn with ashes, as the Prince said, —

"I forgot that you were to tell me some particulars of the treatment of the slaves; I'm afraid I shall not find any of them left, when I make up my mind to visit America."

He soon turned away, as the General was introduced to him. Sonnenkamp began to feel somewhat strange and neglected in the circle, but his countenance brightened as he saw Bella and Frau Ceres walking together so confidentially.

"You have hardly spoken to the Countess," he said to Eric.

"Ah, I'm thinking of something quite different," answered Eric. "I should like to hear our new Baron tell his servants: John, Peter, Michael, from this day you must address me as Gracious Herr, or Herr Baron. He must appear ridiculous to himself."

"Perhaps Doctor is a finer title," replied Sonnenkamp sharply; "or is that born with a person?"

Eric's remark irritated him, and he would have been glad to send him out of the company. But he suddenly became more amiable, as Bella approached and said to him,

"Do you know, Herr Sonnenkamp, what we are all really here for, and what this whole fete means? It is a christening feast, and our gracious Prince has played off a good joke. The Wine-dealer has striven for nobility so long, at last offering up his

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daughter as a sacrificial lamb, that the Prince could not help granting it to him at last. And isn't it good that he has given him the name Herr von Endlich? (At Last.)

Then in a very amusing way she went on to describe how fine it would be if so old a candidate for baptism suddenly cried, I don't want that name, I want another.

Turning to Eric, she sketched the whole assemblage for him with apt, though somewhat malicious strokes. She ridiculed with most sarcasm a knot of young girls, who evidently could not forget the heavy weight of hair upon their heads, for the hair-dressers from the Baths and the Fortress had been hurrying, since early morning, from house to house, to deck out the girls' heads in proper company style. Bella mimicked the girls as they said to each other, "Please tell me if my chignon is still on."

With much merriment she pointed out a tall, lank Englishman, coming in sight with his stout wife and three slim daughters, who wore long curls and extraordinarily brilliant dresses. He lived in winter at the capital, in the summer at a country-seat, passing the time in angling, while his daughters were constantly drawing. He was considered very rich, and his wealth had a singular source; many years before, a brother of his wife had been sent to Botany Bay, and, being an experienced trader, had there succeeded in establishing a large export business, and laid the foundation of the family wealth.

Bella was full of charming humor, and Eric felt as if he had done her injustice. He had listened to the sharp judgment, the mental dissection, of Bella from the physician, when he ought to have contested it decidedly. He looked at her as if asking pardon for something, and she, well satisfied, showed a fresh cheerfulness, which was not wanting in magic power. She treated Eric with marked attention before the whole company.

Count Clodwig joined the group, and remarked that he was always surprised anew to see how many odd characters settled here on the banks of the Rhine. The Major stood apart and looked at Herr Sonnenkamp, as if he would say: I beg you, don't do this too; stay with us. It would be pleasanter to me than to give her the prettiest bon-bons which I shall carry home, to be able to say to Fräulein Milch, What they say about Herr Sonnenkamp isn't true! For again had Fräulein Milch penetrated the well-guarded mystery.

Eric pitied the Major, who looked unusually dull, and he succeeded in getting at the cause of his low spirits, for the Major said,

"It's just as if a Christian were to turn Turk! Ah, you may laugh, but Fräulein Milch is right. All that beautiful money, which has been earned with so much trouble, is now to be thrown away on the nobles, and we commoners may stand aside, and never have any more notice taken of us."

Eric silently pressed the Major's hand, and the latter asked: —

"But where's Roland?"

Indeed, where was Roland? He had vanished soon after their arrival, and was nowhere to be seen. The evening came on gradually, and wonderfully beautiful music from wind instruments was heard in the thick shrubbery; for a while, the guests in the garden were silent, and then it seemed as if the music made them only the more talkative. Eric looked for Roland, but no one could tell him anything of him.

The music ceased, and darkness gathered. On the balcony of the house appeared a trumpeter, in a costume of the middle ages, and sounded a call; the company repaired to the house, up the steps to the great hall and the adjoining rooms. Here a few seats were placed; in the foreground, two great arm-chairs, dressed with flowers, for the bride and bridegroom; behind them, a line of chairs for the oldest and most distinguished guests.

Frau Ceres was conducted to a seat near Bella; Fräulein Perini had managed very adroitly to get near her and pull gently at her cloak. Frau Ceres understood, and all eyes, which had been resting on the bridal pair, now turned to her. Such ornaments, imitating a wreath of wheat-ears of which each grain was a great diamond, such a dress, sown thick with pearls and diamonds, were never before seen; a long-continued murmur of applause ran through the assembly.

Frau Ceres stood by her chair, as if rooted to the spot, till Bella begged her to sit down; she looked smilingly at the splendid jewels: it was all very well for the American woman to put those on, but she couldn't put on such a neck and arms as her own.

Now it appeared that one of the walls of the room was only a curtain, which was presently drawn up. Vine-dressers were discovered, who sang and spoke praises of the family, and finally presented a myrtle crown.

The curtain fell amidst the expressions of delight of the whole company, and as they were about to rise, a voice behind the curtain cried: —

"Remain seated!"

The curtain rose again, and, behind a

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thin gauze, Apollo was seen among shepherds and vine-dressers, and Apollo was Roland; the curtain had to be twice raised again, for all were enraptured with the tableau, and especially with Roland's god-like appearance. Bella nodded exultantly to Eric, who was standing apart; but he felt as if benumbed, as he asked himself what effect all this would have on Roland, and how Roland could have concealed it from him. It was not long before Roland joined the company in his ordinary dress; he was admired and praised on all sides, and nearly taken off his feet.

Frau Ceres was congratulated almost more than Roland, on her happiness in having a son of such divine beauty; repeated regrets were expressed that her daughter was not at the fête. Frau Ceres received all this most amiably, saying constantly: "I thank you most sincerely, you are very kind." Fräulein Perini had taught her her lesson.

New rooms were opened, where tables were spread, and the guests seated themselves.

Roland went to Eric.

"Are you the only one to say nothing to me?" he asked.

Eric was silent.

"Ah," Roland continued, "it has cost me much trouble to conceal anything from you, and still more to be attentive for these last few days, but I wanted to surprise you."

Eric recovered himself, and decided that it would be best not to lay much stress on the matter, so that it might be less likely to have any hurtful effect; he only warned Roland to be careful not to take too much wine. The boy was so full of happiness that he preferred to sit near Eric, to show him that he was moderate, rather than to take a seat which was reserved for him at the table of the bride.

Pranken, who, with the portrait painter's aid, had arranged the tableau, was in a state of singular excitement this evening, for the idea kept ringing in his head that he might have married the Wine-count's beautiful daughter; here was new-varnished nobility, to be sure, but everything was made sure of; here would be now an attractive widow, or, better still, an attractive unhappy wife. He drove the thoughts away, however, saying to himself that he loved Manna.

As a former comrade of the bridegroom, and as friend of the family, Pranken proposed the toast to the bridal pair; he spoke well, and in a humorous tone, as was best, and the company were well pleased.

The discharge of a cannon gave notice that the fireworks were beginning, and the guests betook themselves to the veranda and the garden.

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CHAPTER X.

FIREWORKS AND THEN DARKNESS.

Bella suddenly stood by Eric's side, without his noticing her approach.

"You are unusually grave to-day," she said in a low voice.

"I am not used to the confusion of such a fête."

"I always feel as if you would have something to say to me," she murmured lower.

Eric was silent, and Bella continued:—

"Does it seem to you as it does to me, when you see your nearest friend in a great assembly, as if you met in a strange land, or as if struggling in a river, in which you are drowning?"

"Ah! Bravo!" many voices cried suddenly. A flight of rockets was sent off, while music was heard, and a trumpet across the river took up the strain, and echoed it. Far away they saw the people from the towns and villages about, standing on the river-banks, their faces lighted by the glare.

"Ah," exclaimed Bella, as all was dark again, "we are all nothing but slaves! If we could live like that, that would be life indeed! to burn like that rocket in the free air, then come, darkness and death; ye are welcome!"

Eric trembled; he did not know how it happened, but he was holding Bella's hand fast in his.

Again bright fires rose from river and hills. It seemed as if all those people who were looking on from the distant shore must have seen Eric's hand in Bella's. Eric drew back with a start. The Prince came up, and Bella immediately took his arm. Eric was left alone, and as he saw Bella walking up and down the road before the house, leaning on the Prince's arm, he tried to recollect whether he had not said to her, I love you. It seemed to him that he had spoken aloud, and yet it could not be. Fire-wheels, the monogram of the bridal-pair, Roman-candles, were exhibited. and at last from a boat on the Rhine rose a great golden wine-flask, which burst in the air, and scattered a shower of sparkling drops of light. Music resounded, and from the shore a shout was heard, as if all the waves had found a voice.

Eric's brain reeled; he knew not where he was, nor who he was. Suddenly he felt an arm laid on his own: it was Clodwig. Eric would have liked to kneel before him, but he felt unworthy to utter a word, and he could only make an inward vow: I will send a bullet through my heart, rather than allow it ever again to thrill with this excitement.

Clodwig spoke of Roland, saying that he could not think it right or wise that he should be thrust into a sphere strange to him. Eric answered at random; Clodwig believed that he must know of the project, while Eric thought he was alluding to the military profession; and he seemed so distracted and inwardly excited, that Clodwig admonished his young friend to exert himself less strenuously, and not to torment himself needlessly.

Eric avoided saying good-night to Bella.

It was late when they drove back, in the same manner as they had come, except that the Cabinetsrath and his wife accompanied them, to spend the night at Villa Eden.

The Minister rode with Sonnenkamp, and the conversation naturally fell on the fete, and on the dissolution of the old and respected firm of wine dealers, since the Wine-count was now about to sell at auction his whole stock. The Minister's lady said that Bella had told her that she intended to write Eric's mother and aunt for a visit; Pranken pretended to know of this plan, but was inwardly very much surprised. Now that they were alone and need not be reserved with each other, the Minister's lady said emphatically, that no one could bring about the conferring of the new dignity on Herr Sonnenkamp more easily and simply than the Professor's widow. It was not exactly decided upon, but it was hinted to Herr Sonnenkamp, that he might establish the first claim of hospitality by inviting the ladies to Villa Eden.

Sonnenkamp smiled to himself, for he had a further plan of making Frau Dournay useful: the General had said several times that she was a trusted friend of his sister, the Superior of the island convent; here were two wires to be pulled.

In the third carriage Eric rode again with Roland; they sat silent for a long time, as the carriage rolled slowly on. At last a voice called out:—

"Good evening, Herr Captain!"

Eric ordered the driver to stop; it was Claus's son, the cooper, who was walking along the wood. He brought Eric a greeting from Martin Knopf at Mattenheim, and said that he had been there with a message from his father, asking Knopf to appear before the jury the next day, as a witness in his defence. Roland rubbed his eyes, and looked about him as if he were in a strange world. He asked the cooper to get into the carriage with them. The cooper thanked him, but declined, and went on to say how wonderful it had been, as he came over the

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hills from Mattenheim, to see, just as he left the woods, the strange fires mounting to heaven from the Rhine far below, and he had stood just where the rocks echoed the cannon. He held out his hand to Eric, but not to Roland.

As the two drove on again, Roland said:

"Then Claus has heard the cannon in his prison, and perhaps he saw the fireworks too. Ah, he has not a single dog to speak to near him. I've often been sorry that he had to wander about so constantly through the fields by day and night, but now he must long for that old weariness. And while he sits there in prison, everything is growing outside, and the thieves of hares and foxes know, that no one knows their burrows so well as he: and I do believe he is innocent. Ah, why must there be poor, unhappy men; why can't the whole world be happy?"

For the first time, Eric saw that he must advise Roland not to say anything to his father of these thoughts about the huntsman, and about the poor and unfortunate.

Eric felt quite satisfied that all the praise Roland had received for his appearance as Apollo had done no harm.

CHAPTER XI.

A REPRESSED HEART.

"WHAT are we, when judged by our most secret thoughts?"

So had Eric written in answer to a dainty note which Bella had written to him. She had requested him to send the coat in which she had painted him, as something peculiar in its cut had yet to be introduced, in order to give the finishing touch to the portrait. The way in which she had signed her name startled Eric; there was her name, Bella, but instead of her surname, an interrogation point between two brackets. She had scratched this out, as if thinking better of it, but it was still to be perceived.

She put the coat upon the lay-figure in her studio; it affected her strangely, and she stood there now, with her hand placed upon the shoulder of the figure.

"What are we, judged by our most secret thoughts?" had Eric written, and it seemed now as if the words came from the mouth of the model before her.

Bella shuddered, and was seized with a deadly trembling, for as she stood there with her gaze fastened upon the floor, and her hand laid upon the garment of the man not her husband, it seemed to her as if she should sink to the earth. At this instant, her whole life unfolded itself to her view.

The days of childhood — there was no definite image of these. The teachers praised her quick comprehension; a French bonne was dismissed, and a strict English governess received into the family; Bella learned languages easily, and good manners seemed natural to her. Her smart repartees, when she was very young, were repeated admiringly, and this flattered her vanity, and extinguished all childish ingenuousness.

Ladies and gentlemen visiting the house, or meeting her casually in different places, praised her beauty in her hearing. She was confirmed, but the holy ceremony appeared to her only as the sign of her deliverance from the nursery, when she must lay aside her short dresses and put on long ones; and when going up to the altar, the thought which predominated in her was, Thou art the fairest one. As the bishop had taken tea the evening before with her parents, he was not to her a supernatural being as to the rest, for he had spoken familiarly with her, and she appeared to herself to be, in the church, the central point of all observation.

Her father yielded to her wishes, and Bella, at fourteen years of age, was introduced the next winter into society. She made a brilliant appearance, and was much courted; everybody spoke with admiration of the air of fresh youth that hovered around her. But she early exhibited a sort of coldness, so that she was nicknamed the mermaiden, and in her eye there was what might be called a cold fire. Even the reigning Prince singled her out. She still kept the engagement-card of her first court-ball as a sacred relic, and with it a withered bouquet.

Now followed an unbroken chain of homage and attention. Bella, with her ready and apt replies, was the life of the circle in which she moved. While yet a child, her beauty had been praised in her own hearing, and now that she was a woman, her remarkable mental powers were extolled, either directly or indirectly, so that she was sure to be informed of it. Her striking remarks and keen criticisms were quoted, and her witticisms passed around. In this way she had acquired the reputation of great knowledge, which, with her spirited piano playing, and above all, her skill in painting, caused her to be regarded as a social wonder, and to be held up as a pattern to many a young girl who came out after her in society.

Before she was sixteen, she had refused many offers of marriage, and she smiled when she heard of the betrothal of one and another, for she could say, You could have married this man, if you had wished to.

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Her mother would have been glad to have her married young, but her father was not willing that his child should be separated from him so early; he hoped that some prince of the collateral branch would unite himself with her in marriage.

Her seventeenth birthday was ushered in by a morning serenade from the band of the Guards, and congratulations poured in from all sides; but if she could have been seen then, as the tones of the music awakened her from sleep, and a new thought stirred within her, her large eyes would have presented a look different from any ever seen in them before. The thought was, I have no belief in love. All this singing and talking of the power of love is nonsensical romance! Her mother's teaching had contributed not a little to produce this conviction; she had early uprooted the influences of love, perpetually representing to her daughter that the main thing was, to make a brilliant match; and Bella, in fact, had never loved any one, for she insisted upon the submission of him towards whom she felt any preference. From one of her mother's cousins she heard suggestions of an opposite nature; she frequently said, half satirically and half seriously, that the only right love was that directed towards a man of a lower condition. If you should love the artist in whose studio you work, or your teacher of music or of language, that would be genuine love. But it seemed to Bella as if any special attachment to a teacher was like entertaining a love for a livery-servant, or even for a being of a different species, and choosing him for a husband.

On that seventeenth birthday, there was perceptible, for the first time, that cold, glassy, Medusa-look, which regarded men with indifference, as if they were nothing but shadows; but no one remarked it, and it seemed as if on that day something was paralyzed within her which would never again feel the stirrings of life.

Before she was twenty, after the year of mourning for her father had elapsed, with feelings already cold and benumbed, Bella withdrew from society, entering it only occasionally, as if she were performing a burdensome duty. She studied, she painted, she practised music, she occupied herself with artists, scholars, and statesmen; and she wore a constant rigidity of countenance and look, except when she was flinging around her criticisms, which always produced a greater impression from the fact that her deep, masculine voice was in striking contrast with her feminine appearance.

It created considerable excitement, when it was understood that Bella had removed the opposition of her parents to her younger sister's marrying before her. Bella stood before the altar by the side of her sister, and through her sister's bridal veil she saw the dark brown eye of the Adjutant General, who had been recently made a widower, fixed upon herself. She moved her lips slightly, saying to herself with self-rejoicing pride, You will woo me in vain. She took delight in wounding, disturbing, breaking hearts, by turns enticing and then repelling them. She had said to her father, I should be glad to marry, if one can like to do what one cannot bring his mind to do; but to stand up before the altar and say yes, for life and for death! —— I was frightened when I heard my sister say that, and I thought that I must cry out, "No! No! No!" And I do not answer for myself, that I should not involuntarily say no.

She proffered herself as companion of an invalid princess, who was ordered to reside for a year at Madeira; on returning, after the death of the princess at the island, Bella smiled when she was told of the Adjutant General's marriage. She could not complain that suitors gradually grew fewer in number, but still she was vexed at it.

She took now a journey with two English ladies to Italy and Greece, with Lootz for her courier. She spent a whole winter at Constantinople, and the malicious tongues at the capital said, that she was after a man of exalted position, and that everything else was a matter of indifference to her; that she would marry a gray-bearded Pacha. On her return Bella generally appeared dressed in satin.

Then came Clodwig's suit; and, to the great surprise of the whole capital, the betrothal and the wedding took place within four weeks of each other. Bella retired with her husband to Wolfsgarten, not essentially changed by marriage, and without gaining that full development of the nature it gives to woman. What was there still to be developed? She was accomplished, and she was specially happy, so far as happiness was possible to her, in perceiving — what she had not looked for, although she hoped to find it — Clodwig's nobility of soul.

For the first time, she felt humble and modest; her life was peaceful and retired, and the days flowed on in uniform round. Clodwig was as attentive, as sympathizing, and as full of devotion as at first; a composure and a steadfastness, such as is assigned only to the gods, was the prevailing characteristic of his spirit. He was personally considerate and tender, to an extreme degree; and he exhibited his vehement nature, which found vent in the strongest ex-

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pressions, only when dwelling upon matters of universal interest. Bella recognized in this only a justifiable excitement, for Clodwig's active life had been passed in a petty, crippled period, and wasted in the trifling affairs of a liliputian Principality, while he himself was fitted for grander and more universal affairs.

Clodwig often reproached himself for the firm confidence that he had entertained during his whole life, that the Idea would, of itself, become realized; and he now saw, when it was too late, that one must plunge headlong into the current of coöperating influences. As soon as he went again among men, and especially when he entered the court-circle, he was always gentle and indulgent. He was full of admiration of his wife's talents, and if at any time he moderately criticized and set forth her superficial and external mode of looking at things, she was for an instant inwardly disturbed; but when she looked upon the noble, refined form of the old man, all frowardness vanished. She was happy to see herself, and to make the world see, how she could cherish a great and good man. She knew that she would be watched; and the world should never have occasion to remark invidiously upon her conduct.

All at once there had now entered this peaceful circle a man who disposed of her, her husband, and the whole house, without effort and with irresistible power; and she had been opposed to him at first, had expressed that opposition to Clodwig, and had zealously labored against his becoming established in the neighborhood. But as Clodwig had brought into prominent notice, with an enthusiastic kindness of heart, the sterling traits of this man's character, had even drawn him towards herself against her will, she resigned herself to the pleasure of this enlivening intercourse.

Thus stood Bella before the portrait to which she still delayed to put the finishing touch, inwardly chafing, and thoroughly vexed with herself. She, the mature in experience, to be the subject of such a girlish infatuation! "girlish infatuation," she called it, and yet she could not free herself from it. Was it because her self-love was wounded; was it because, for the first time, she had stretched out her hand and it was not taken?

Her large eyes sparkled, and whoever had beheld her now would have seen the Medusa-look.

She left the studio with all speed, and went to her dressing-room. She stood there before the large mirror, and let down her luxuriant hair, staring into the mirror, while upon her closely pressed lips lay the question, Art thou then so old? She opened her lips, like one ill with fever, like one parched with thirst, panting to drink. Her eyes beamed with a joyous brightness, as she said to herself: Thou art beautiful. Thou art able to judge of thyself as impartially as thou wouldest a stranger. But what means this silly infatuation?

She took the long tresses of her hair in both hands, and held them crossed under her chin; she was terrified as she now perceived, for the first time, how strong a likeness she bore to the bust of Medusa in the guest-chamber above.

"Yes, I will be Medusa! He shall be shattered, turned into stone, annihilated! He shall kneel to me, and then I will trample him under my feet!"

She raised her foot, but immediately covered her face with both hands, while tears flowed from her eyes.

"Forgive, forgive my pride, my madness!" was the cry uttered within her. Fierce irritation and passionate emotion, pride and humility, contended together within her breast, and it seemed as if the chill of that morning serenade had been all at once removed, and the heart had unfolded itself, as some long-closed calyx unfolds its petals. A longing sprang up within her — a longing for home, as in some wayward child who has run away from its parents into the woods — a longing for some place of shelter and rest, — a home: where is it? where?

She yearned for a soul to which she could lay open all her own soul.

"Forgive me! forgive!" was echoed and re-echoed within her. At first it was directed to Clodwig, and now to Eric.

"Forgive! forgive my pride! But thou canst not know how proud I have been: and I sacrificed to thee more than a thousand others, more than the whole world, can even conceive and comprehend."

She shuddered at being alone, rang for her dressing-maid, and made an elaborate toilet.

"Tell me how old I am. Do you not know?" she suddenly asked.

The dressing-maid was startled at the question, and not returning an immediate answer, Bella continued: —

"I have never been young."

"O my gracious lady, you are still young, and you never looked better than you do now."

"Do you think so?" said Bella, throwing back her head, for a voice within her said: Why shouldest thou not be also young for once? Thou art! Thou art what thou

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cannot not help being; and let the world be what it must be too.

Leaving the house, she went around the garden, seeming to herself to be a captive. Unconsciously she went into the room on the ground-floor, and as she stood near the unearthed antiquities, a voice within her said: —

"What are all these? What are these vessels? Lava-ashes! all ashes! What is all this antiquarian rummaging? What is the use of this picking up of old buried trash, this perpetual thinking and talking about humanity and progress? all foreign, dead, a conversation over a death-bed; nothing but distraction, forgetfulness; no life, no hope, no future; never towards the day, always towards the night, — the night of the past, and the ideal of humanity. But I am not the past, I am not an ideal of humanity. I am the to-day, I will be the to-day. Ah me, where am I!"

She went into the garden, and watched two butterflies hovering hither and thither in the air, now alighting upon the flowers, now coming together, separating again, and again uniting.

"This is life!" was the cry within her. "This is life! they grub up no ancient relics, they live with no antiquities."

Then came a swallow darting down, seized one of the butterflies, and vanished.

What is thy life to thee now, thou poor butterfly?

Below, over the Rhine, clouds of smoke from the steamboats were floating in the air, and Bella thought: —

"If one could only thus fly away! What do we here? We heat with our blood this dead earth, so that it may have some little life. Our life-breath is nothing but a puff of vapor that mingles with thousands of other vaporous films; this we call life, and it vanishes like the thousands" ——

The children of the laborers upon the estate, coming out of school, saluted the gracious lady.

Bella stared at them. What becomes of these children? What is the use of this fatuous renewing of humanity?

As if to conceal herself from herself, she buried her face in a flowering shrub. She left the park; she saw in the court outside the dove cooing about his mate. The beautiful mate was so coy, picked up its food so quietly, hardly paying any attention to the tender gurgling, and then flew away to the house-top, where she trimmed her feathers. The dove flew after his mate, but she shook her head again and took flight.

Then as Bella was gazing with a fixed look, she saw a servant yoking some oxen. He first placed a pad upon the head of the beast, and over that a wooden yoke.

"This is the world! This is the world," said a voice within her. "A pad between yoke and head, a pad of thoughts, of got-up feelings."

The servant was astounded to see the gracious lady staring so fixedly, and now she asked him: —

"Does it not hurt them?"

He did not understand what she meant, and she was obliged to repeat the question; he now replied: —

"The ox don't know anything different, he's made for just this. Since the gracious Herr has let the double yoke be taken off, and each ox has now his own yoke to himself, they're harder to manage, but they draw a deal easier than when they were double-yoked."

Bella shivered.

"Double yoke — single yoke," was sounding in her ears, and suddenly it seemed to her as if it were night, and she herself only a ghost wandering around. This house, these gardens, this world, all is but a realm of shadows that vanishes away.

It was terribly sultry, and Bella felt as if she should suffocate. Then a fresh current of air streamed over the height, a thunderstorm unexpectedly came up, and Bella had hardly reached the house before there came thunder, lightning, and a driving rain.

Bella stood at the window and stared out into the distance, and then up at an old ash-tree, whose branches were dashing about in every direction, and whose trunk was bending from the gale. The tree inclined itself towards the house, as if it must there get help. Bella thought to herself, — For years and years this tree has been rooting itself here and thriving, and no tempest can wrench it away and lop off its boughs. Does it know that this storm will pass over, and serve only to give it new strength? I am such a tree also, and I stand firm. Come tempest, come lightning and thunder, come beating rain, neither shall you uproot me, nor lop off my boughs!

"Eric!" she suddenly exclaimed aloud to herself. Clodwig now entered, saying, — "Dear wife, I have been looking for you."

Bella's soul was deeply moved when she heard him call her "dear wife." Clodwig showed her a letter that he had been writing to the Professor's widow, inviting her, according to Bella's expressed desire, to make a visit of several weeks at Wolfsgarten.

"Don't send the letter," said she abruptly, "let us again be quietly by ourselves; I would rather not be disturbed now by the Dournay family."

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Clodwig expressed his opinion that the noble lady, so far from interfering with their quiet, would be an additional element of beautiful companionship, and would be the means of their seeing Eric in a pleasant way.

The storm had ceased, and when Bella opened the window, a refreshing breeze drew in. She held the letter in her hand; it had been tempest, lightning, rain, and thunder that raged to-day in her soul, and now there was refreshing life. She agreed with her husband; she said to herself, that intercourse with the noble woman would restore her to herself; and for a moment the thought occurred to her that she would confess all to the mother, and be governed by her. Then came the thought that this was not necessary; it would be very natural for Eric to come to Wolfsgarten, and her intercourse with him would fall back into the old peaceful channels.

Bella wrote a short postscript to the letter of her husband; and the Doctor also, who came in just as they were closing the letter, added a few words.

CHAPTER XII.

AN OPEN COURT AND AN OPEN INVENTORY.

The fireworks were still crackling and snapping in their ears, the dazzling lights still gleaming in their eyes, and the music of the band still sounding in their recollection, when they were obliged to make ready for appearance at court, as witnesses in the affair of the burglary.

Pranken remained with the guests at the Villa, having undertaken to show them the recently purchased country-house.

Sonnenkamp, Roland, and Eric, and also the porter, the coachman, Bertram, the head-gardener, the little "Squirrel," and two gardeners repaired to the county town to attend the trial. They went by the house of the Wine-count, now styled Baron von Endlich, where the remnants of fireworks were still visible, scattered here and there; the house was yet shut up, the family still sleeping their first sleep as members of the nobility.

Eric spoke of the beautiful and genuinely pious conduct of the priest towards the prisoners. He was a living example of the grand doctrine that religion required one to interest himself in the stumbling and the unfortunate, whether they were guilty or innocent. The Doctor, on the other hand, maintained in a very droll fashion that it was an extremely beneficial thing for the Ranger to pass, once in his life, several weeks within walls and under a roof.

There was little else said; they reached the county town in good season.

Sonnenkamp went to the telegraph office, in order to send some messages, one of which was directed to the University-town for the widow of the Professor.

"At that time — does it not seem to you as if it were ten years ago? — at that time it was very different from to-day. Don't you think that there were villains also among the singers, perhaps worse ones than those in prison yonder?"

It pained Eric grievously that Roland must be initiated so early into the bitterness and the dissensions of life. They went together to the court-house.

The president and the judges occupied a raised platform; on the right sat the jury, and on the left, the accused and their counsel; the room was full of spectators, for there was a general curiosity to hear the mysterious Herr Sonnenkamp speak in public, and no one knew what might be picked up in the way of information.

The dwarf, the groom, and the huntsman sat on the criminals' seat. The dwarf took snuff very zealously, the groom looked around imploringly, and Claus held his hands before his eyes.

The dwarf looked as if he had had good keeping, and thriven under it; he gazed around the hall with an almost satisfied bearing, as if he felt flattered that so many people concerned themselves about him. The groom, whose hair had been very nicely dressed, regarded the crowd with a contemptuous glance.

Claus seemed to have pined away considerably, and when the dwarf wanted to whisper something to him, as he sat there at a little distance from his fellow defendants, he turned away displeased. He looked up to the space occupied by the spectators, and saw among them his wife, two of his sons, and his daughter; but the cooper was not present. The children appeared to have grown since he had last seen them, and they were dressed in their Sunday-clothes, in order to witness the disgrace — no, it must simply be the honor of their father.

The huntsman moved restlessly on the seat, and spoke to his wife with his lips, uttering no sound. He meant to tell her to be undisturbed, as in a couple of hours they would go home together.

Sonnenkamp, Eric, and Roland were in the witnesses' seat.

Roland sat between his father and Eric, to whom he clung as if he were afraid. Knopf sat next to Eric, and nodded to Roland.

"Before the law the testimony of all men

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is equal," said Roland in a low voice to Eric, who knew what was passing in Roland's mind.

His pride was a little touched that the testimony of the porter would be of as much account as that of his father, but he had quickly overcome the feeling.

The indictments were read. It had been found, on further investigation, that one compartment of the closet built into the wall, separate from the great safe, had been opened with a key and then closed again; a considerable sum of money had been taken from it, the greater part of which was found in the groom's possession.

At his own request, Sonnenkamp was summoned first, to identify the stolen property.

Roland straightened himself up, when he heard his father give his testimony in so plain and gentle a manner.

Sonnenkamp expressed regret that people should meet with misfortune, but justice must have its course.

He was dismissed. He had already made his bow, and was about to leave the court-room, when the counsel of the accused groom asked the President whether he intended to let Herr Sonnenkamp off from testifying as to the amount of gold and valuable papers in the closet; if Herr Sonnenkamp did not know this, he could not tell exactly how much had been stolen from him in the part that had been broken into.

The whole assembly was breathless. Now it would be seen what was the amount of Sonnenkamp's wealth, reputed so immeasurable. A perfect silence prevailed for a time; it was broken by Sonnenkamp's asking whether the court could oblige him to testify on his conscience as to the sum, or whether he could reply, or not, as he saw fit. The President said, that he must express the opinion, that the amount of what was stolen was certainly of great importance in reference to the sentence to be imposed upon the accused.

Again there was a pause. Sonnenkamp unbuttoned his coat, unbuttoned his waistcoat, and taking out a little memorandum-book, he approached the judge's seat, and offered it to him, saying:—

"Here is an exact inventory of the notes payable to bearer, of those payable to my order, and of the sum in specie."

When half way up the steps of the platform where the president and the judges sat, Sonnenkamp stopped, for the defendant's counsel now cried:—

"We have an open court, entirely open, and there is nothing which the Herr President is to know, and we to be ignorant of."

"Well then," said Sonnenkamp, turning round, "it shall be told openly: Twelve millions of paper payable to the bearer, three millions to my order, and only two hundred thousand in gold coin. Is that satisfactory?"

A bravo was uttered by the spectators, and the President was obliged to threaten them with clearing the hall, if it were repeated.

Sonnenkamp descended; he had desired to leave the court-room at once, but now he seemed otherwise determined, for he took a seat again on the witnesses' bench. Roland cast down his eyes, and tremblingly seized hold of Eric's hand, which he held firmly. There was a low talking among the crowd, a movement this way and that, so that the President was obliged to command quiet by violently ringing his bell; and Sonnenkamp left the hall.

The head-gardener gave his testimony, which was scarcely listened to. When Eric was summoned, there was again silent attention.

Eric narrated the whole story, and the huntsman's uniform expressions of bitterness at the difference between the rich and the poor, but protested that he regarded the man as incapable of committing any crime against society.

A strange whispering pervaded the whole assembly when Eric narrated the inquiry of Claus: What would you do, if you were the possessor of millions? The question had now, in a manner, gone forth to the whole world.

Knopf was summoned. He offered first a written testimony of the old Herr Weidmann, with whom the huntsman had lived several years as a servant, who testified to his uprightness, his incapability of any deceit, much less any positive crime. Then Knopf added from his own knowledge, how the huntsman was always racking his brains over many matters which he could not master.

Roland was summoned, and advanced with an erect attitude to the witness-stand; Claus nodded to him.

Roland could not be sworn, as he was a minor; but it made a good impression when he said in an unembarrassed voice, that he considered his word as good as an oath.

He identified the articles that had been stolen from him; he asserted that his father's rooms had been locked, but he should not be willing to swear to that, as he had not been near those rooms for several days before the burglary. And now, without being asked, he expressed his conviction that

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Claus could have had no participation in the crime.

The huntsman got up at these words, and the forester, who sat behind him, obliged him to sit down again, putting his hand upon his shoulder.

The evidence against Claus seemed to be only as the receiver of stolen goods. The two others could make no defence, and each sought to lay upon the other the guilt of the burglary.

Eric was recalled, in order to testify more in detail concerning the huntsman's request to be shown all over the house, a few days before the robbery. When Eric had sat down, Roland got up and asked: —

"Herr President, may I be permitted to say one word more?"

"Speak," replied the President encouragingly; "say all that you wish to."

Roland stepped forward quickly, with head erect, and said, in a voice that had now a full, manly tone, —

"I here raise my hand in testimony, that my poor brother here is as innocent as he is poor. It is true he has often complained that one man should starve while another gormandizes; but before God and man I declare that he has often said to me: The hand must wither that grasps unjust possessions. Can a man do that, and then go away by night and break into another's house, and rob? I beseech you, I conjure you earnestly, to declare that this man is as innocent as all of you are; as innocent as I am!"

He ceased, standing as if he were rooted to the spot, and for a while there was a breathless stillness in the assembly.

"Have you any thing more to say?" asked the President. Roland seemed now to wake up, and said, —

"No, nothing more. I thank you." He returned to Eric, who grasped his hand; it was cold as ice, and he warmed it in his own. On the other side, Knopf also tried to grasp the hand of his former pupil, but he could not, for he was obliged to take off his spectacles, which had become wet from the great tears rolling from his eyes.

The proceedings were brief. The Head-master was one of the jury, who now withdrew into their room for consultation. After a short absence they returned, and the head-master, who had been chosen foreman, laying his hand upon his heart, announced the unanimous verdict: —

The dwarf and the groom, guilty; the huntsman, not guilty.

Outside, in front of the court-house, as his wife and children, — the cooper among them now, — crowded round Claus, Roland pressed up to him and seized his hand.

The huntsman turned from them all, saying that he must speak to young Weidmann, who had been one of the jury; the young man came up just then, and Claus cried out to him, with a great flow of words, that he must tell his father that all his troubles were wiped out, since every one had heard what Herr Weidmann thought of him.

Young Weidmann went to Eric and congratulated him on having formed such a pupil; others came also to offer congratulations and shake hands. Eric begged young Weidmann to remember him to his father, and say that he should soon pay the promised visit to Mattenheim.

Knopf stood in the midst of a group of people, begging them not to spoil the boy with their praises; and, in his effort to keep others back, he refrained from going himself to shake hands with Roland.

Sonnenkamp appeared, and all took off their hats to him respectfully. Here was the man possessed of such incredible wealth, and he wore a coat like other people, and had to stand on his own feet. Sonnenkamp seemed a prodigy to them all. How was it possible for a man to possess such wealth? But there were some knowing scoffers who declared that Herr Sonnenkamp had overstated his property, and others, still more knowing, who were willing to swear that he was even richer than he had said, but they were hardly noticed. Sonnenkamp, greeting all around in a most friendly manner, went to Claus to congratulate him, and then called Roland aside. Roland stood before his father for the first since he had learned his great wealth; his eyes fell; looking up to him seemed like looking up to a high mountain, but Sonnenkamp laid his hand kindly on his shoulder, and told him that he might drive home alone with Eric, as he was himself obliged to remain in town to wait for a telegram.

Roland begged Claus and his family most pressingly to ride home with him; the huntsman refused, but Roland urged it so warmly that he at last yielded, and entered the carriage with his wife, leaving the children to walk. Roland took the released prisoner in triumph through the town and villages; the wife was embarrassed at riding in such state, but Claus himself looked round without constraint, only saying several times: —

"All has gone on very well without me, and will do very well, when I am across the ocean."

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To Eric he expressed his determination of emigrating to America with his family.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE MAJOR MAKES A CONQUEST

THE same sun that shone at Wolfsgarten, where Bella was maintaining a severe internal struggle, and that shone through the lowered green shades in the court-room upon the bench of the accused, glimmered also through the closed Venetian blinds in the quiet sitting-room of the Professor's widow in the University-town. Eric's mother sat by the window filled with flowers, in the piano recess, at her silent work, thinking of her son; it was a subject of constant thought with her, why he had to enter upon a mode of life so out of the ordinary course.

She often looked up sadly to the portrait of her husband, which seemed to say to her: My child, both of us entered upon a path in life out of the ordinary course, thou even more than I; and that is transmitted as an inheritance from generation to generation; we ought to rest content, as thereby we keep a firmer hold upon the spirit of our son, and though he may be thrown down to the ground by fortune, he can never be held there permanently.

So did the mother console herself; and Eric's letters were also a source of consolation. He had made a faithful report to her, then he excused himself for the irregularity and haste of his letters, on the ground that he must forget, for a time, himself and everybody else who belonged to him, as only in this way could he hope to gain possession of another soul. At first he mentioned Clodwig and Bella frequently, — his home feeling with these friends, and the happy realization of a state of tranquillity; then, for a while, there was nothing said of Bella, except sometimes a brief greeting from her at her request. The mother had not noticed this, but aunt Claudine, who seldom said any thing unless her opinion was asked, and then had something to say very much to the purpose, did not hesitate to remark unreservedly, after Clodwig's and Bella's visit, on being asked what impression it had left, that she had noticed a certain restlessness in Bella's look, and she feared from the manner in which she had looked at a likeness of Eric, taken when he was young, that there was here a more than common interest. The mother was forced to assent to this, for she had also noticed how deeply interested Bella had been in making inquiries concerning Eric's youthful years. But she said further to her sister-in-law that Bella was an artist, at least was more than a common dilettante, and had observed with the eye of an artist the picture, that was exceedingly well painted; a considerable sum had already been offered for it in order to be put into an art-collection.

There was stillness in the abode of the two ladies, who lived almost as quietly as the flowers which throve so well under their watchfulness and care. The postman brought a letter in Clodwig's neat handwriting, in every word of which the man himself could be discerned, so neat and regular were the letters, with no stroke hastily made, and none too elaborately precise; the whole had an appearance of uniformity, and the lines were straight and at an equal distance apart, though the paper was unruled. A feeling of pleasure was awakened by the mere sight of the letter, and the contents were such as to strengthen this quiet satisfaction. He said that the Professor's widow would lay him under an obligation of gratitude by accepting an invitation to make a visit of several weeks. He appealed to the friendly relations with her deceased husband, and the beautiful renewal of them in his intercourse with Eric, who gave to him a youthful friendship such as he had scarcely dreamed of. Lastly, he appealed to their mutual personal acquaintance, and there was a written smile when he added, that, during his whole life, he had never made a demand upon the heart which had not met with a response, and he prayed her now not to shame him in his old age. He closed by saying that he entreated the mother of his friend Eric to permit him to call himself "her friend Clodwig." There was no formal politeness in the letter, and yet it was full of a delicate friendliness.

Bella had hastily scratched underneath, in a coarse hand, a request that the mother and aunt would honor her with a visit; she said that she wrote only a few words, as she felt sure that she should be favored with the intimate intercourse of the respected mother and the amiable aunt. In a postscript she besought them to bring with them Eric's music.

In the letter there was enclosed a second one from the Doctor, who claimed to have been a scholar of the old Professor. He offered good-humoredly his professional services, and there was only one brief sentence in which he suggested that it would be a protection and a safeguard to his young friend Eric, to be again under the eye of his mother.

This awakened in her many thoughts,

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and she resolved to accept the invitation. Sonnenkamp's telegram was delivered.

Just as she had finished reading this, there was another knock, and the Major entered.

When the mother saw him, at first she was frightened, not recognizing him, as she looked at the red face, the short, white hair, and the decoration on his breast. For a moment it seemed to her that he was some messenger of justice, who had come to execute some commission or other, she knew not what, that endangered Eric's welfare.

The Major did not mend matters at all, when he said, —

"Frau Professorin, I come to execute a warrant of ejection; but I am not indeed to drive you out of Paradise, but to shut you up in the Garden of Eden."

He had been making up this pretty speech during the whole journey, and he had said it over inaudibly to himself certainly a hundred times; and now it came out so clumsily, that the good lady trembled so that she could not rise.

The Major cried: —

"Don't get up; everybody knows that there's no ceremony at all to be made with me. I don't desire to incommode any one; I greatly prefer that people would sit when I enter. Isn't it the same with you? One feels sure in this case that he doesn't make any disturbance."

"Have you come from my son?"

"Yes, from him too. Observe, I'm not one of the best people in the world, neither am I one of the worst; but there's one thing I can say to my credit, that I have never in all my life envied anybody but you, and you I did envy when you said, 'my son;' that I did envy you for. Why can't I say this too? If I only had such a son as you have!"

Now there was tranquillity at last. The Major delivered a letter from Sonnenkamp and the Cabinetsräthin, and desired that the letters should be read immediately, as they would render it unnecessary for him to say anything.

The Professorin read, and the Major watched her countenance while she was reading, with peculiar marks of quiet satisfaction.

The Professorin bade him welcome, and called her sister-in-law, who came in.

The blinds were opened, and the in-streaming light shone upon cheerful faces.

"What shall we decide upon doing?" asked Aunt Claudine.

"There is no longer any question of deciding; we accept the hearty invitation."

"Which?"

"Of course Herr Sonnenkamp's."

"That's right," said the Major with a broad smile. "Will you allow me to light a cigar? Did your husband, now gone to his eternal home, smoke too?"

"Yes, indeed."

Aunt Claudine had quickly lighted a match, and held it up to the Major with her delicate fingers.

"That's fair! that's fair!" cried the Major. "You've given me fire, and I promise to go through fire for you."

He was very happy over this turn, and he puffed away yet happier.

There were, of course, a great many things to be got ready, before they could set out. The Major promised that Joseph should come and bring everything away after they had departed; not one thread should be left behind. He then withdrew for a few hours, in order to pay a visit to some brother free-masons.

At midday, the Major was riding with the two ladies in a first-class railroad car towards the Rhine, and he was as proud and as happy as if he had carried off the army-chest of the enemy.

CHAPTER XIV.

POTATOES AND SOMETHING BETTER BESIDES.

Claus and his wife were in the same carriage with Eric and Roland. When Claus reached the line where his beat began, he asked them to stop, and got out.

"No, I go in no carriage here," he said. "And look here at my hands; my hands have been hand-cuffed. What now are they to do? Are they to avenge themselves? On whom? And if I should know on whom, what then?"

He took up a clod of earth, raised it up towards heaven, and cried: —

"By thee I swear that I will emigrate. The New World must give me some land of my own; I have long enough looked after the land of other people in the old."

Eric and Roland also got out, and went with the couple into their house. Then a sudden call was heard from the vineyard, and Sevenpiper came from it with the halberd which Claus had always carried as the badge of his office as field-guard. He handed it over to Claus, saying, —

"Take this now again; I have kept it faithfully for you."

He joined the escort of the couple to their home. The dogs barked in the yard, and the birds flitted here and there, and twittered all together, for their master had come back. But the black-bird sang louder than

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all, caroling, Rejoice in your life; but she stuck fast at the second bar. The field-guard gazed round upon all, as if he had just waked up. At last there was a calm, and the whole family sat round the table, and ate the first new potatoes which a neighbor had boiled for them. Never had Roland eaten any food which had such a relish, and all laughed when he said, —

"Claus, these potatoes originated there where you are going and where I came from; they were born in America, and we have immigrated hither."

They had a pleasant time together, and Roland presented the stolen watch which had been restored to him to Claus, as a lasting token of remembrance. He was not willing to take it, not even when Eric and Sevenpiper joined in the request.

"Just take it, father," finally said the cooper, and Claus yielded.

Sevenpiper led the talk to-day. He made fun of the field-guard for being a great deal too uneasy; and for continually worrying how people got to be so rich, which was wholly needless. A man might, indeed, be empty, but one couldn't eat more than his fill, or do more than quench his thirst; and the rich man couldn't get any more out of sleep than to sleep sound, and sleeping sound didn't depend upon the bed in which one slept, but it was just sleeping sound; and to ride in one's coach was pure nonsense; it was much better to go upon one's own good walking-sticks.

There was also some mention made of the dwarf, and Sevenpiper said, —

"Yes; if any one wants to visit the grave of this mannikin, he will have to carry a ladder along with him."

"What for?" asked Roland.

"Because he will be hanged."

Claus did not like to have them talk of bad people.

Sevenpiper was a good representative of "blessed be nothing." He had sent a child to his house, and just as some bottles of wine arrived which Fräulein Milch had sent, there was heard singing at the entrance of the house. The whole organ was there with all its stops, and soon Eric and Sevenpiper were singing too.

At last Eric insisted that they must be on their way home; and as they were turning from the village path into the road, a carriage drove up, from which signals were made, and the powerful voice of the Major cried: —

"Battalion, halt!"

They halted; in the carriage with the Major were the mother and the aunt.

"This is the only thing which I had yet to wish for," said Roland. "Herr Major, Claus has been released; he is innocent."

The mother embraced her son after she had first embraced Roland. They got out, and Eric walked to the villa arm-in-arm with his mother, who held Roland by the hand on the other side. The Major politely offered his arm to the aunt, but she declined, excusing herself by saying that it was a peculiarity of hers never to take any one's arm.

"That's really the better way; Fräulein Milch thinks so too. You'll get acquainted with her; you'll be good friends with one another, you may rely upon that. She knew every thing — every single thing. It's incomprehensible how she picked it all up. She knew that Count Clodwig had sent you an invitation. But we know a stratagem or two; we've been beforehand with him. 'He whom fortune favors leads home the bride,' as the saying is."

Music was heard in the distance, and the Major informed them that it was a part of the wedding celebration at Herr von Endlich's.

"O mother, if I am ever again desponding and low-spirited, I will call to mind this hour, and be again happy!"

The mother could not speak; her heart was too full.

There was a very friendly welcome at the villa. The Cabinetsräthin embraced and kissed the Professorin; Frau Ceres sent an excuse for not appearing. Sonnenkamp came after nightfall.

The moon shone brightly when Eric and Roland escorted the mother and the aunt to the vine-embowered dwelling. And as she stood here upon the balcony, Eric's mother took his hand again, quietly, and said, —

"If thy father could see thee, he would rejoice in thee; thou hast still thy pure and good glance; yes, all is well, thou hast the old pure glance."

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BOOK VII.—CHAPTER I.

THE MOTHER IS HERE.

"My mother is here!"

A dewy atmosphere of inexhaustible freshness encompassed Eric; he heard the voice of a child awakening from a dream, and yet it was he himself who had spoken. He closed his eyes, and went back in thought to the days of childhood; all that had since excited and oppressed his spirit was torn into fragments, and had sunk out of sight.

"My mother is here!"

This was now a call of duty. Eric stood by Roland's bedside; it was never necessary for him to speak in order to waken him, for as soon as he looked directly upon him, Roland waked up. Now he opened his eyes, and his first words were:—

"Thy mother is here!"

Eric heard these same words, now spoken by another, which he had heard in his own dreamy reverie, and, placing his hand upon the brow of the youth, he regarded him with a mingled feeling of joy and sorrow. Why has this poor rich boy not the blessedness of a mother's love?

The new day received its consecration, for Eric and Roland began it by going to give a greeting to the mother.

As they were walking along the river, Roland shouted across it:—

"Father Rhine! Eric's mother is here!"

Eric smiled; the youth's face was all a-glow.

They went to the mother as to a temple, and they came away from her as from a temple, for this gentle, peaceful spirit conveyed a benediction in every word, in every movement of the hand, in every glance of the eye; and she it was who appealed to the sanctity of established rule, and the persistent continuance in duty, for she said to them that she should regard it as the most perfect proof of love and loyal attachment, if they would go on with their work to-day just as they did yesterday; in every situation in life, whether in tribulation or in gladness, the appointed duty must be performed.

They were again seated at their work, and they read together, to-day, the return of Ulysses to Ithaca. Eric was somewhat absent, for everything took the hue of the feeling that he was with his mother; he overcame this,—he would be wholly engaged in what was before him, but he caught himself unexpectedly drawn away in this direction as he looked at Roland. "Ah! why can you not have the same feeling? The best refreshment and blessing for a human being is the mother's love. Every other love must be sued for, be obtained by conquest, be earned, be struggled for through obstacles; a mother's love alone one has always unsought and undeserved."

Now Bella came again into his mind. Eric hoped to have annihilated everything in himself that was false to human nature and to purity, and summoning up a greater strength than ever, a strength obtained by hard wrestling, he devoted himself to the work of instruction, and succeeded in projecting himself and the youth into the life of another, so that they forgot everything immediately around them.

At noon, the realization of the mother's presence came to them as a fresh gift. They were in the garden together; Frau Ceres was not visible, and she begged, through Fräulein Perini, to be excused. Sonnenkamp smiled, for he knew that it had never occurred to Frau Ceres to send an excuse, and that Fräulein Perini had done it of her own accord; and it was well for her to do so, he thought, for the refractory disposition of his wife led her to turn away from the guests intruding upon her privacy, and her strong point was in declining; she allowed nothing to approach her. Fräulein Perini manifestly took very great pains to render herself as agreeable as possible to the Professor's widow, and was grateful as a child when she was shown how to execute a new piece of handiwork.

The Cabinetsräthin served as a very excellent means of bringing them together. There was something exceedingly captivating in the way in which she so very modestly placed herself as the inferior of the Professorin, giving to her the position of honor which she might perhaps have attained as a right, but which was now conceded to her by sovereign grace; for the Cabinetsräthin repeatedly said, that the Professorin had been the first lady at the court in her day, and that even now, if the court circle wanted to specify any exalted excellence, they pointed to her. She found herself, at first, put under some degree of constraint by being placed upon such an elevated pinnacle, but she was grateful to the illustrious lady for her evident endeavor to convert her condition of dependence and poverty into one which was regarded with respectful homage.

Fräulein Perini herself was subdued by this character so calmly dignified, this countenance so placid and open, so beaming with youthful brightness, so benignantly radiant that nothing unworthy or impure could approach; and in this countenance the heart manifested itself, always young, full of the inspiration that had been awakened by the ideal life of her husband, and that was now called forth by the presence of her

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son. She said the simplest things with such charming grace, that they appeared to be of great importance, and with such freshness, that it seemed as if this were the first time they had ever been known

While they were together at noon, a letter came from Bella. She sent a welcome to the Professor's widow, and appointed the next day for a visit.

Frau Dournay wished to send back an answer by the messenger, but he had been immediately sent off, no one knew why. It was Sonnenkamp who had given the order, and when she despatched her letter through a messenger attached to the house, it strayed first into Sonnenkamp's cabinet, who understood how to open it very dexterously, and who read with great satisfaction the reply which was no less decided than it was delicate in expression. Sonnenkamp smiled as he read where the lady laid stress upon the fact that she was the guest of the family, received as such in the kindest manner, and begged that the promised visit might be made to them, and to herself as their visitor.

Sonnenkamp smiled again and again, for he confidently expected that the Professor's widow would compel the whole neighborhood to accept himself, finally, as a member, in full standing, of their social body.

CHAPTER II.

THE IGNORANT IS READY TO BE TAUGHT.

SONNENKAMP went from his cabinet to the room of Frau Ceres; she sent word to him in the ante-chamber by a maid, that she desired to see no one. Paying no attention to the message, he went in and found her lying on the sofa, with the curtains drawn, so that in the large room there was a dusky twilight. Frau Ceres looked at him with her large dark eyes, but spoke not a word, only extending to him her delicate, small hand with long finger-nails. He kissed the hand, and then seated himself by the side of his wife.

There was silence for some time, and then he began to explain to her that a nearer approach was to be made to the accomplishment of his plan through the guest now in the house, for this lady's hand would open the folding-doors of the apartments of the princely palace.

At the mention of the palace, Frau Ceres raised herself a little; her restless look showed how she was stirred by hope; for, beyond the sea, and in all his devious wanderings, Sonnenkamp had always held before his wife this idea, like some bright fairy-tale, that she would be able to enter into the court-circle, and it seemed to her as if she were to be introduced into some heavenly sphere, where everything was resplendent and glorious, a perpetual round of godlike existence. Such was the idea Frau Ceres had entertained of court-life. She was aware now that this was an exaggerated notion, but, wherever she went, she heard of this good fortune, and saw that every one was striving towards the court-circle, and she was angry with her husband, that his promises made so often and so long ago had never been fulfilled. They came to Europe; they had retired into seclusion, where people said everything was so beautiful, but whence she was continually expecting to be summoned to Court.

Why is there so long delay? Why are people so distant? Even Bella, the only one who exhibited any friendliness, treated her like a parrot, like some strange bird whose bright plumage she was amused with, but with whom she had nothing more to do than from time to time to give it a lump of sugar, and address to it some casual, pretty word. Even the recollection of her having surpassed all others in splendor at the fête of Herr von Endlich was only half satisfactory to Frau Ceres.

In the midst of all her apparent listlessness and want of interest in external things, she was continually harping upon one thought, and this thought had been instilled into her by Sonnenkamp; but it had become stronger than he desired, taking exclusive possession of her being.

He understood how to represent in a very plausible way, that the Professorin — to whom the Cabinetsräthin herself looked up, because she had been the favorite and most influential lady of the Court, even the friend and confidante of the Princess-dowager — that this lady would give to the whole family a new splendor, and surely be the means of their attaining the desired end.

Sonnenkamp succeeded in impressing her so deeply with his sagacity, that Frau Ceres at last yielded, saying, —

"You are, in fact, very wise. I will speak to the tutor's mother."

He now proceeded to give some instructions, how she should bear herself towards her, but, like a spoiled child, — even almost like an irrational animal, Frau Ceres shrieked out, clapped her hands, stamped her feet, crying, —

"I won't have any instructions! not a word more! Bring the lady to me!"

Sonnenkamp went to the Widow, deeply moved and troubled; he wanted to give to her some directions in regard to her inter-

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view with his wife, but was afraid of every hint, and only said, —

"My dear little wife has been a little spoiled, and is very nervous."

Eric's mother visited Frau Ceres, and found her lying quietly upon the sofa; she had sense enough to know that the less demonstrative one is, the more effect does one produce upon others.

When the visitor on entering made a very graceful courtesy, Frau Ceres suddenly forgot everything, and before a word could be said, she cried, —

"You must teach me that! I would like to courtesy in that way. Is not that the way they do at Court?"

The visitor knew not what to reply. Is this something worse than a nervous person, — is she insane? She retained self-command enough, however, to say: —

"I can very well conceive that our forms must be rather strange to you, in your free Republic; I think that it is better at the first interview to shake hands."

She extended her hand, which Frau Ceres took, and rose as if forgetting herself.

"You are ill, I will not disturb you any longer," said the Professor's widow.

Frau Ceres considered it would be better to pass for a sick person, and said, —

"Ah, yes! I am always ill. But I beseech you, remain."

And when the Mother now addressed her, the sound of her voice, its tones of deep feeling, made such an impression upon her excitable nature, that she closed her eyes, and when she opened them, great tear-drops stood upon her long lashes.

The Mother expressed her regret that she had made her shed tears, but Frau Ceres shook her head violently.

"No, no, I thank you. I have not been able to weep for years — these tears have lain here — here." She struck her bosom with violence. "I thank you."

The Mother wanted now to withdraw, but Frau Ceres rose up quickly, went up to her as she stood there struck with astonishment, and shrinking as if from a crazy person, fell on her knees before her, and kissed her hand, crying, —

"Protect me! Be a mother to me; I have never called any one mother; I have never known a mother."

The Mother raised her up, saying, —

"My child, I can be a mother to you — I can and will. I am happy that such fair tasks are assigned me here, tasks that I can lovingly fulfil. But now be composed."

She led Frau Ceres back to the sofa, carefully helped her to lie down, and covered her with a large shawl; it was an odd complication of soft cushions in which she always lay muffled, as if she were buried.

She held the Mother's hand fast, and sobbed without cessation.

The Mother now extolled their happiness in having each of them such a son, speaking less of Eric than of Roland; and as she went on to relate how in the twilight he had appeared like the transfigured form of her own dead child, Frau Ceres turned towards her and kissed her hand. She proceeded quietly to speak of herself as a person of many peculiarities, which rendered it no easy thing for any one to live with her; she had been in the habit of being too much alone, and she feared that she was not young enough and had not animal spirits sufficient to be the companion of a lady who had every claim to the brilliancy and joy of a stirring life.

Frau Ceres requested her to draw back the curtains a little, and as she saw her more plainly she smiled; but immediately her countenance, with the fine, half-opened mouth, assumed again the listless look which was its habitual expression; she took the fan and fanned herself.

At last she said, —

"Ah yes, to learn! You cannot think how stupid I am, and yet I would so like to be clever, and I would have learned so many things, but he never wanted me to, and has not let me learn anything, and always said: 'You are fairest and dearest to me just as you are.' Yes, it may be to him, but not to myself. If Madame Perini were not so kind, I don't know indeed what I should do. Do you play whist? Do you love nature? I am very simple, am I not?"

Perhaps Frau Ceres expected that the mother would contradict her, but she did not, only saying: —

"If there is anything that I can teach you, I'll do it cheerfully. I have known other ladies like yourself, and I could tell you why you are always ailing."

"Why! Do you know that? you?"

"Yes, but it is not flattering."

"Ah, no matter; tell me."

"My dear child, you are all the time ill, because you are all the time idle. If a person has nothing to do, then his health gives him something to do."

"Oh, you are wise, but I am weak," said Frau Ceres.

And there was in her an utter helplessness and weakness; she looked upon herself, and was looked upon by Sonnenkamp, as a fragile toy; and at the same time she was indolent, and the least effort was a burden to her. She did not know whether

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to hear or to see required the greater exertion; but she found the latter the greater bore, for while one was reading one must hold the book and hold one's self in a particular position, and therefore she always let Fräulein Perini read aloud to her; this had the advantage that one could go to sleep whenever there was the inclination.

This was the case now.

Whilst the Mother was speaking, Frau Ceres suddenly let go her hand, and it was soon evident that the reclining one had fallen asleep; Frau Dournay sat there in that chamber furnished splendidly and richly as if it were an apartment in some fairy tale. She held her breath, and did not know what course to take. What is the meaning of all this? Here are riddles in plenty. She did not dare to change her position, for she was afraid of waking the sleeper. The latter turned now and said, —

"Ah, go now, go now, — I will come down soon myself." She left the room.

Sonnenkamp was waiting for her outside.

"How did she seem?" he asked anxiously.

"Very gentle and quiet," replied the Mother. "But I have one request. I hope to cure the excitability or lassitude of your wife, but I beg you never to ask me what we have said to each other. If I am to gain her entire confidence, I must be able to say to her in good faith, that what she tells me is told to me alone; and that what she imparts to me will never pass my lips. Are you willing to promise that we ladies shall do as we like together?"

"Yes," answered Sonnenkamp. It seemed hard for him to consent, but he felt that he must.

CHAPTER III.

A NEIGHBOR SECURED.

PRANKEN came the next day, and when he met the widow of the Professor, summoned to his aid his most polished manner; she gave him to understand at once, that she regarded him as a son of the house. She did this with so much delicacy and such a charming tact, that Pranken was extremely delighted.

When she thanked him for having been the means of obtaining such a position for Eric, he declined receiving any thanks for what he had done, as it was only a trifling amount toward the payment of his debt to the late Professor, to whom he owed all the culture he possessed.

He said this with a tone that entirely won the Widow's heart; she could make allowance for the exaggeration of politeness, but she felt there was a basis of sincerity, inasmuch as no one, unless he were utterly abandoned, could have come within the sphere of her husband's voice and eye, without receiving therefrom a good influence for life.

Pranken spoke of his brother-in-law and his sister, and how much Eric was liked and loved at Wolfsgarten; and he conveyed in a happy turn, how much he expected the lady's presence would effect in composing and calming the recently excited and disturbed state of his sister. He hinted at this very guardedly, representing only how difficult a task it is to live with an elderly man, even a very noble one, and how in some unexpected way the apparent harmony might be disturbed.

She understood more than Pranken imagined, and she was very glad to find the young man disposed, in the retirement of country life, to a deeper consideration of the influence of one human being upon another.

Pranken could not refrain from disclosing something of his religious transformation, but he did it as an act of special confidence. There was suddenly presented to him the vision of this lady near Manna, who would lay open to her her whole soul, and would be assured that he acknowledged his inward change to the whole world; and it just occurred to him now, that the Superior had spoken in high praise of this lady in Manna's presence. A smile came upon his lips, for he thought how excellent a use could be made of her in diverting Manna from her childish intention of taking the veil, although it was in every way to be deplored that this lady was not a member of the same church.

He then invited the Professor's widow, by Sonnenkamp's request, to drive with them to the country-house which the Cabinetsräthin — he corrected himself immediately and said the Cabinetsrath — thought of purchasing; she would certainly do her part towards securing such an agreeable neighbor for Herr Sonnenkamp. Her objection, that she was hardly yet settled, was flatteringly set aside.

The carriage drove up.

The Cabinetsräthin and Sonnenkamp entered, and the mother must drive with them to the villa now for sale. They were in extreme good humor on the way, but involuntarily there came over Eric's mother the thought that she was mixed up in some sort of intrigue, and that her simplicity was made use of for some interested purpose. What it was, she was wholly ignorant. She felt serious anxiety, and this positively in-

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creased when Sonnenkamp said, as they entered the house, that it belonged to him, and he was glad to be able to pass it over to his noble neighbor.

What does this mean? Has a surprise been prepared for her? Does Sonnenkamp mean to give her the house?

She was soon aware of her mistake, for the Cabinetsräthin immediately proceeded to assign the rooms to herself, her husband, and her children. She had two sons in the army, and one invalid daughter; rooms were also designated for her grandchildren, and when she was looking for a choice spot for herself, Sonnenkamp promised to have the grounds laid out anew. She was amazed to find what capabilities the grounds possessed.

Sonnemkamp was extremely complaisant; it had been, indeed, his desire to reserve the country-seat as the payment for his patent of nobility,— for the sum to be paid by the Cabinetsrath was merely nominal,— but he had been obliged to give way to Pranken's representations that this was utterly impracticable, and that it was much wiser to be on neighborly terms with so influential a man, as thus every thing would come about much more naturally.

The Cabinetsräthin sat with the Professor's widow in the garden, and endeavored to impress upon her that she would surely be glad, through her great influence, to aid the Sonnenkamp family in obtaining the rank which was their due; at first she went no farther, but it was her fixed plan that the widow should apply the main lever, and that neither she nor her husband should take a prominent part. Should the plan miscarry, they would remain concealed, and the learned widow, who was reputed as somewhat erratic, would be the only one committed.

Under high-sounding and lofty expressions of magnanimity and disinterestedness, there was a hidden policy not easily unravelled.

When Pranken was alone with Sonnenkamp and the Cabinetsräthin, Sonnenkamp smiled, as one does who considers it a good joke to allow himself for once to be circumvented. He listened in a very friendly way while Pranken was representing to him that the Cabinetsrath must be put in possession of the house at once, for if it were done later, either shortly before or shortly after the consummation of their wishes, it would give rise to scandalous remarks.

Sonnenkamp smilingly congratulated his young friend on being so well-fitted for a diplomatic career; it was not denied by Pranken that he should adopt that as his employment, rather than the life of a landed proprietor, provided it could be done with the consent of those nearest to him, and of his fatherly friend, as he termed Sonnenkamp.

Pranken knew a very accommodating notary, who came that very evening.

The purchase was concluded, and the Cabinetsrath was the neighbor of Herr Sonnenkamp.

As Sonnenkamp was taking a walk with Pranken in the mild evening, the latter for the first time shrank from his expected father-in-law, when he said, —

"My dear young friend, you must certainly have had something to do with usurers before this. I know these tender-hearted brethren; they hang together like a secret priesthood. But I would say to you, that the most delectable insight into the so-called human soul would be furnished by a history of bribery. I am acquainted with the different nations and races, I have tried it everywhere, and it has hardly ever been unsuccessful."

Pranken looked strangely at the man. He had confidence in him; but that he should speak so freely of the bribery of all nations disturbed him somewhat, and it pained him greatly to think that he himself was to be son of such a man.

Sonnenkamp continued good-humoredly,

"You evidently entertain the old prejudice that bribery is a bad thing, just as a little while ago usury was regarded to be. It's nothing but a matter of business, and it's a stupid thing for the government to require an oath from persons, that their transactions shall not be affected by any receiving of money. As far as I am concerned, it may be, and it usually is, with the judges, only a matter of form; when it comes to that point, a rich man knows how to get off, provided he hasn't foolishly gone too far. It's very curious, that among other nations, among the Romans and the Sclaves, men took the offered money, and, under some form or other, gave an opportunity for competition in bidding; but among the simpering Germanic people, the women are employed in this business. Of course! Among no people in the world are so many cows employed in agriculture as among the Germans, and in this business, too, they harness in the cows. Here the lady must be applied to in extremely gallant style, and I must confess that I would much rather deal with the women, for they keep their word; there's nothing more common than to give a bribe, and to have the bribee fail to keep his promise, unless another is added just as large. My father——"

Pranken started. For the first time in

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his life, Sonnenkamp spoke of his father, but he went on quietly, —

"My father was a connoisseur in the art of bribery, and in Poland his way was, to give a man a note for a hundred or a thousand dollars, as it might be, but he tore the note in two, kept one part himself and gave the other to the person bribed, surrendering his own half only when he had gained his end. You do not think it is necessary to divide thus with the Cabinetsräthin?"

Pranken felt hurt to hear a lady of the nobility pointed out and arraigned in this style. He gave Sonnenkamp the most conclusive assurances, who said further,—

"All proceeds in a regular order, and what is designated by the old-fashioned word bribery, is a necessary consequence of an advanced civilization. As soon as a people enters into complex relations, bribery is there, must be there, sometimes open, sometimes concealed; and I know this, that nothing has a greater variety of forms than bribery."

As Pranken stood there in fixed amazement, Sonnenkamp, taking his arm, continued, —

"Young friend, it is the same thing whether I buy an agent or a vote for my election as member of Parliament or of Congress, or whether I buy an agent or a vote to make me a noble. In America we are more open about it. Why should not this Cabinetsrath and his spouse make some profit out of their position? Their position is their whole property and capital. I am glad — it's all in order. In Germany you are obliged to cloak matters over respectably. It's all the same. If you take up the diplomatic career, as I hope you will, I shall be able to give you a good many lessons."

Pranken declared himself ready to learn a great deal, but inwardly he had an inexpressible dread of this man, and this dread changed into contempt. He proposed to himself, if he ever married Manna, to keep away from this man as far as possible.

Sonnenkamp was so happy in finding a fresh confirmation of his knowledge of men, that he endeavored to impart it to his own son.

The next morning, as they were leaving the breakfast-table, at which the Cabinetsräthin had been present, he took Roland with him into the park, saying to him, —

"Look, these noble people! All a pure cheat! This Cabinetsrath and his family, they are beggars, and I make them persons of property. Don't let it out, but you ought to know it. They are all a rabble; great and small, high and low, they are all waiting to have an offer for their souls as they call them. Every one in the world is to be had for money."

He took delight in dwelling upon this at length; he had not the remotest conception what a deep commotion and revolution this was exciting in the youth's soul.

Roland sat speechless, and Sonnenkamp turned over in his mind whether he had acted properly, but soon quieted his doubts. Religion, virtue, all is an illusion. Some — this Herr Dournay is one of that number — still believe in their illusions, and impose upon themselves and upon the world. It is better, he quieted himself in conclusion, that Roland should know all to be a mere illusion.

CHAPTER IV.

A DIFFERENT ATMOSPHERE.

After the first days, the Mother understood what her son meant when he complained of the difficulty of maintaining a steady and firm hold upon thought, in the midst of the distractions with which he had to contend, like those upon a journey. In such a house as this, with extensive possessions and a great variety of duties, that devotion of the mind, which is so necessary for the thorough acquisition of any branch of knowledge, is continually interfered with, and it is even difficult, in such relations, not to lose one's self. Without laying out any programme, at any rate without any announcement of one, she resolved to regulate her own method of living; only when one possesses himself can he have anything to supply to the calls of others.

Eric and Roland went every day to bid her good-morning, and a consecrated sphere soon encompassed the mother; whoever approached her acquired, in a degree, a nobler bearing, and pitched his conversation to a musical and well-tuned key. She had sterling good sense, without any claim to originality or genius either in her own eyes or those of others; her mind was not intuitional but logical, and what she comprehended and discovered by investigation appeared to her to be necessarily true; she made as little show of knowledge as of dress, for it is a matter of course that one should be neatly dressed.

Chasteness, in the highest and purest signification of the word, was the impression which the Mother made, both in regard to her external appearance and her inner being; she was pure in thought, and pure in feeling; she had been for thirteen years a lady of the court, and knew the world; but she retained something of an ideal atmos-

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phere; she knew vice and believed in virtue; she was quick and cautious, ready to accept the gage of battle and nobly yielding, at the same time.

If she were externally and superficially compared with Bella, the older lady would be at a disadvantage; but on a nearer consideration, she had something satisfying in her presence and conversation, while Bella was only exciting.

Bella not only desired to excite attention to her personal appearance and her sentiments, but she was also fond of proposing subjects for discussion, and propounding the most difficult questions; she was always putting something forth and making a stir. She gave very cursory and off-hand replies to what was said to her, and could set out in good style what she heard, so as to be extremely taking at the first acquaintance, but a longer familiarity with her showed that it was merely fluent talk.

The Professorin, on the other hand, made no demands, was grateful for all that was offered, and was ready to lend it serious thought.

Externally, the ladies could hardly be compared, for the personal appearance of the Professorin was not what would be called distinguished; she was somewhat plump in figure, of a pale blond complexion, and that fresh purity of look which one sees portrayed in the pictures of well-preserved women of Holland. Her strongest characteristic was a uniform reserve; she could listen quietly to every communication, and she could withhold her reply, if she had any opinion to express, until she had patiently heard all that was to be said.

When questions were addressed immediately to her, to which she did not want to give a direct reply, she had the faculty of not seeming to hear them; and if she were pressed to give a decided reply, she answered only just so far as she thought best, never allowing herself to be urged beyond a prescribed limit.

She soon became the centre of the circle. The fundamental trait which characterized all that she said and did was truthfulness; she never spoke for effect, she never smiled when there was nothing to smile at; she gave to every utterance of her own the natural tone, and to every utterance of others the requisite degree of attention. This truthfulness was not compromised in the least by her reserve, for she never violated the truth in the smallest particular, and it is not necessary to speak out everything that one knows and thinks. This is not craftiness; it is rather the simple dictate of prudence, and prudence is a virtue too; it is the same thing as goodness; nature herself is prudent, that is to say, veiled.

She was very happy to indulge and cultivate her fondness for botany by means of Sonnenkamp's splendid collection of plants, and his essentially valuable communications.

The Mother and Aunt lived together in perfect harmony, and yet were very different in character; and as they had very different spheres of knowledge in which they found enlivenment, so also they had different spheres of life. Their amateur-pursuits were the two most beautiful in the whole circle of sciences. The Professorin was a botanist, Aunt Claudine an astronomer, sedulously avoiding, indeed, every appearance of the bluestocking; she passed many silent evenings in the tower making observations of her own, generally through a small telescope, without any one's being aware of the fact.

The Professorin took delight in spending several hours every day in the hot-houses, and among the rare imported plants; and when Sonnenkamp one day showed her his method of training fruit-trees, she did not express admiration and astonishment as other people did, but exhibited a great proficiency in the knowledge of the new French art of gardening, and remarked how peculiar it was that the restless French people, when they withdrew from the whirl of active life, should devote themselves with such tender and persistent care to the cultivation of fruit. Sonnenkamp's countenance gleamed with pleasure, when she maintained that in orcharding, as he practised it, there was the unfolding of a talent for military generalship, inasmuch as he was called upon to decide what part of the fruit should be allowed to mature, and what should be sacrificed and removed in its unripe state in order that the rest might thrive.

Sonnenkamp expressed himself as very much obliged for the compliment, but he smiled inwardly, thinking that he saw through the fine courtly breeding; that this lady, before she came there, had read up in his favorite pursuit, in order to render herself agreeable to him. He received this homage in an apparently natural way, as if he regarded it as sincere; but he determined not to allow himself to be taken in by any such arts.

He meant to offset politeness with politeness; and he hastened to place everything in a friendly way at the disposal of the Mother and Aunt Claudine.

Towards Frau Ceres the Professorin soon established a definite line of conduct, allowing her to claim but a limited portion of

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her time; and now Frau Ceres went into other rooms than her own apartments, which she had never done before, and she frequently sent to ask the Mother if she might pay her a visit; the request was sometimes granted and sometimes refused.

Frau Ceres soon felt her mental influence, for she was always interested in some thought or other; she was like a priestess whose vocation it was to cherish perpetually a little flame upon an altar. When Frau Ceres was eager to make this and that inquiry about life at Court, the Professorin was able, in an unlooked-for way, to arouse her to think, and take an interest in general matters.

The Aunt, who was very reserved in her manners, brought a new element of life into the house. The grand-piano in the music-saloon, that had lain so long idle, now sent forth clear and brilliant tones; and Roland, who had wholly neglected musical practice, entered into it with zest, and became the aunt's scholar. The house, formerly called dry by Eric because it was void of music, was now refreshed and steeped in harmony; it was a cheerful time with the new guests. Sonnenkamp's countenance acquired an expression of satisfaction such as it had never worn before, when Frau Ceres, sitting by him in the music-saloon, said, —

"I cannot conceive how it used to be before these noble ladies were here."

One day, after Aunt Claudine had played beautifully, and had repeated a piece twice at Eric's request, Frau Ceres said to the Mother: —

"I envy you, that you can so comprehend and enjoy all this."

She evidently plumed herself upon this little formula learned by heart, but the Professorin unintentionally stripped off this pretty adornment by saying: —

"Each one has his own satisfaction, either in nature or in art, if he is only true to himself. It is not necessary to understand and know a thing thoroughly before one can derive pleasure from it. I take delight in these mountains, without knowing how high they are, and what strata they are composed of, and many other things that men of science are acquainted with. So you can take pleasure in music. Endeavor first of all to get the simple truth, and try after nothing farther, and everything else will be yours."

No one imagined, not even Frau Ceres herself, that she went out of the music-saloon to-day a different being; for no one is able to say what word will have a direct influence upon a thirsting, aspiring, and receptive heart and mind. Frau Ceres was not conscious of the real change in herself; without learning, without acquirements, one can enter into the joys of life and of knowledge through one's own natural susceptibilities.

The quiet, healthful life of the house was suddenly broken in upon; a carriage rattled on the gravel of the courtyard; a silken train rustled: Bella and her husband made their appearance.

CHAPTER V.

A DOUBLE GAME.

Like a bit of a home in a foreign land comes a meeting with friends among new surroundings, and the visit of Bella and Clodwig was a true pleasure to Frau Dournay; Bella embraced her rather impetuously, while Clodwig took her hand in both of his.

"But where is Eric?" asked Bella very soon, holding the Aunt's hand fast, as if she must cling to something.

With an uneasy glance first at Clodwig, then at Bella, the Mother answered that it was a rule not to allow the study-hours to be interrupted even by so pleasant a family occurrence as their welcome visit; she emphasized the word *family*, and Sonnenkamp, acknowledging it with a bow, said that an exception might be made to-day, but Clodwig himself begged that this should not be. Bella dropped the Aunt's hand, and stood with downcast eyes, while the Professor's widow watched her closely.

Bella looked fresh and animated; she was in full dress, and wore a large cape of sky-blue silk, under which her bare arm was seen in all its roundness.

They went into the garden, and Sonnenkamp was pleased to hear Frau Dournay explaining his system of horticulture, but he left them in order to announce their visit to his wife, wishing to use every effort to prevent her declaring herself ill.

Bella walked with the Mother, and Clodwig with Aunt Claudine, with whom he was soon in animated conversation. The Aunt, who was an accomplished piano player, was herself something like a piano, upon which children or artists can play, but which, if no one wished to do so, remains quietly in the background.

Bella asked Frau Dournay many questions as to the impression which all the family made upon her, but she received only indirect answers: she talked much herself; her cheeks glowed, she let her cape fall a little, and her beautiful full shoulders were seen.

"It's a pity that Clodwig didn't know

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your sister-in-law earlier," she suddenly said.

"He did know her well, and, unfortunately for herself, she was, as you know, a much-admired belle at court; but that was long before your time."

Bella was silent; Frau Dournay threw a quick searching glance at her. What was passing within her? what did this restless fluttering from one subject to another mean?

Eric and Roland came; Bella quickly drew her cape over her shoulders again, and folded her arms tightly under it, hardly giving Eric the tips of her fingers.

Roland was extremely lively, but Eric seemed very serious; whenever he looked at Bella, he turned away his eyes again directly. She congratulated him on his mother's arrival, and said, —

"I think if a stranger met you, even in travelling, he would feel that you are still happy enough to have a mother; and what a mother she is! A man seems to lose a nameless fragrance when his mother is lost to him."

Bella said this with a tone of feeling, and yet her mouth wore a peculiar smile, and her eyes seemed to seek applause for these ideas.

Sonnenkamp joined them, and, stroking his chin with an air of satisfaction, asked the ladies to come to his wife, who felt quite revived by a visit from such guests. He proposed that the gentlemen should drive with him to the castle, to take a view of the progress of the building, and of the place where the Roman antiquities had been found. Bella merrily upbraided Sonnenkamp for robbing her of her pleasant guests, then she went with the ladies to the garden-parlor, while the gentlemen proceeded to the castle. Frau Ceres was soon ready to go with them to the music-room, where the Aunt readily consented to play to them; Bella sat between Frau Dournay and Frau Ceres, while Fräulein Perini stood near the piano.

When the first piece came to an end, Bella asked: —

"Fräulein Dournay, do you ever play accompaniments for your nephew?"

The Aunt answered in the negative. Again the Mother threw a quick look at Bella, who seemed to be thinking constantly of Eric, and not to be able, nor indeed to wish, to conceal it. While Fräulein Dournay was playing again, Bella said to the mother: —

"You must give me something of yourself; let me have your sister-in-law at Wolfsgarten."

"I have no right to dispose of my sister. But, pardon me, a word spoken while she is playing annoys her, though she makes no claim for herself in any other respect."

Bella was silent, and Frau Dournay also; but while listening to a refreshing bit of Mozart's music, their thoughts took very different paths. What Bella's were could hardly be defined; her whole being was thrilling with joy and pain, renunciation and defiance. The Professorin owned that her instinctive perceptions were confirmed, though she felt as if they left a stain upon herself.

When the piece was finished, Bella said:

"Ah, Mozart is a happy being; hard as his life may have been, he was happy always, and he still makes others happy whenever they listen to him; even his sorrow and mourning have a certain harmonious serenity. Did your husband love music too?"

"Oh, yes; he often said that men in modern times express in music that imaginative romance of the human heart which the ancients wove into their myths. Music transports us into a world far removed from all palpable and visible existence, and transports us waking into the land of dreams."

They went out upon the balcony, and played with the parrots; Bella told one of them a marvellous story of a cousin at Wolfsgarten, which lived in a wonderful cage, sometimes flying off into the woods; but it was too gentlemanly to get its own living there, and always came back to its golden cage.

Bella's cheeks burned hotter and hotter; her lips trembled, and all at once it occurred to her that she must settle the matter then. She spoke to Mother and Aunt so earnestly, and yet with such childlike entreaties, that they at last agreed that the Aunt should go to her, within a few days, and remain as her guest.

"You will see," she said, in low but half triumphant tone to the mother, "Fräulein Dournay will be Clodwig's best friend; they are exactly made for each other."

Frau Dournay looked fixedly at her. Has it come to this, that the wife wishes to give a compensation to her husband!

CHAPTER VI.

A TROUBLED BUT HOPEFUL MOTHER.

THE ladies withdrew to dress for dinner. Frau Dournay had let down her long gray hair, and sat some time speechless in her dressing-room, with her hands folded in her lap. It seemed to her as if her brain

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had received a heavy blow from what she had become convinced of by unmistakable indications. Her heart contracted, and her tears forced themselves into her eyes, though they would not fall. Was it for this that a child was cherished, guarded, and nurtured by all that was best, that he might end thus? No, not end, — begin an endless entanglement which must lead to utter ruin. Was it for this that a mind was endowed with all the treasures of knowledge, that they might be turned into toys, and masks, and cloaks of baseness?

"O my God, my God!" she moaned, and covered her face with her hands.

Before her mind's eye everything seemed laid waste,— the pure, free, upright, noble nature of Eric, and her own as well. She could feel no more joy in the glance, the words, the learning, of her son; he had used them all for falsehood and treachery.

Now the tears fell from her eyes, as she thought what her husband would have said to this. How often had he lamented that every one said: "The world is bad and totally corrupt; why should I alone separate myself and deny myself its pleasures? And so every one became an upholder of the empire of sin." But how the ruin embraces everything! This noble-hearted Clodwig, with his unexampled friendship — they must meet him, greet him, talk with him, and yet wish him dead. Shame! And he goes on teaching the boy, teaching him to rule himself, and to work with noble aim for others, while he himself — oh horrible! And this passionate woman who could not endure to devote herself to the best of men, what was to become of her? And this Sonnenkamp, and his wife, and Fräulein Perini, and the Priest? "Look," they would all cry, "Look! these are the liberal souls! These are the people who are always talking about humanity, and beneficently work for it; and meanwhile they cherish the lowest passions: they shrink from no treachery, no lies, no hypocrisy!"

Oh, these unhappy wives, these wives who call themselves unhappy! There runs through our time a great lie concerning the unhappy wife. The fact is this: girls want a husband of wealth and standing, and a young and brilliant lover besides. Why will they not marry poor men? Because they can give them no fine establishment. And these men, who offer themselves as lovers,—

"Lovers!" she exclaimed aloud. Frau Dournay sprang quickly up and rang the bell violently, for she heard the carriage drive into the court. She told the servant to ask her son to come to her directly.

Eric came, looking much excited; he gazed in astonishment at his mother, whom he had never seen looking as she did now, with her long hair hanging loose, and her face looking gray like her hair.

"Sit down," she said.

Eric seated himself. His mother pressed her hand to her brow. Could she warn her son plainly? What can a mother, what can parents do, if a child, grown up and free from control, wanders from the right path? And if he has already wandered, can he still be honest? He *must* lie; it would be double baseness if he did not shield himself with lies,— himself and her!

"My dear son," she began, in a constrained tone, "bear with me if I feel lost in this restless life, which has broken in upon my loneliness and quiet. I wonder at your calm strength — But no, I won't speak of that now. What was I going to say to you? Ah, yes, the Countess Wolfsgarten, the wife of our friend,"— she laid a quiet but marked emphasis on this word, and paused a moment, then continued, "wishes to have Aunt Claudine go and remain with her."

"That is good! that's excellent!"

"Indeed! and why? Do you forget that it will leave me quite alone in a strange house?"

"But you are never alone, dear mother. And Aunt Claudine can find a noble vocation at Wolfsgarten; Countess Bella is full of unrest, in spite of all the beauty which encompasses her life; a strong, true nature like Aunt Claudine's, steadfast, and bringing peace to others, will soften and compose her as nothing else in the world could do. I acknowledge the sacrifice that you must make, but a good work will be accomplished by it."

His mother's eyes grew less troubled; her face quivered as from an electric shock, as she said smiling:—

"At last we have all found our mission, we are all to be teachers. Let me ask you how Countess Bella, our friend's wife, appears to you."

A two-edged sword went through Eric's heart; he saw how he was bringing a weight upon his mother's spirit. And perhaps Bella had betrayed by some passionate word a feeling which must not exist, and he appeared as a sinner and a traitor! There was a short pause; then his mother asked, with a sudden change of expression, —

"Why do you not answer me?"

"Ah, mother, I am still much more inexperienced than I thought myself; I cannot put absolute trust in my judgment of people. I have no knowledge of human nature.

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though my father used to say that psychology was my *forte*. It may be so. I can follow a given trait of character back to its remote causes, and forward to its consequences, but I have no true knowledge of human nature."

The Mother listened quietly, with downcast eyes, to this long preamble, in which Eric was trying to gain mastery of himself, but when he stopped, she said:—

"You can at least say something, even if it is not very clear-sighted."

"Well, then, I think that in this highly-gifted woman a struggle is going on between worldliness and renunciation of the world; between the desire to *appear* and the longing really to *be*. It seems to me as if something had been repressed, checked, in the development of her life, and as if she were not yet quite ripe for the beautiful work of making life's evening full and perfect to so noble a man as Clodwig."

"Yes, he is a noble man, and to wrong him would be like the desecration of a temple," said his mother significantly.

The words came out sharply, and she went on: "You have judged rightly, the Prankens are a presumptuous and daring race. It was believed that Bella would marry her music-master, with whom she played a great deal; indeed she played with him in a double sense. But that's not to the purpose. An apparently insignificant event brought about in Bella a derangement—I don't know what to call it—a sort of overturn in her character. In her youth, while she might still be considered young,—she was twenty-two or twenty-three—she had to see her younger sister married before her; she bore it with the greatest composure, but I think that, from that time, a change came over her difficult to be described; she had suddenly grown old, older than she would confess to herself; there was something of the matron about her. This was affected, but a bitter tone was real. Her sister died after a few years, leaving no children. All these circumstances brought out something discordant in Bella; she really hated her sister, and yet behaved as if she were pining for her. She had no mother, or rather, she had one whose highest triumph was to hear people say, 'Your daughter is handsome, but not nearly so handsome as you were when you were a girl.' To be handsome is the chief pride of the Prankens. Bella is unfortunately a development of that unhappy class of society, in which people go to the theatre only to satirize and ridicule the performance, to church only to make a formal reverence to the mercy of God; in which women are held in low esteem unless they are handsome, and know how, as age comes on, to intrigue, and to affect piety. Such a being can say to herself: I have in the course of my life adorned with flowers eight or ten hundred yards of canvas, for perfectly useless sofa-cushions. Is that a life worth living? Now she has no children, no natural fixed duties—"

"And just for these reasons," interrupted Eric, "Aunt Claudine, without knowing it, will have a softening and tranquillizing influence; her calm nature, which never has to renounce, because it never longs for any change, seems just chosen for the work. However highly I value Frau Bella, our friend's wife, for herself, we must think first of all that we are fulfilling a duty to the noble Clodwig; it will establish anew and increase the purity and beauty of his life."

"Well, Aunt Claudine is going to Wolfsgarten; and now leave me, my dear son,—but no, I must tell you something, though it may seem childish. When I saw you running so fast through the garden to-day, I thought of your father's pleasure when he had been on a mountain excursion with you; and once, when you were just eleven, when you had been in Switzerland with him, he said on coming home, that his chief delight had been in seeing you run up and down the mountains without once slipping; and you never did get a fall, though your younger brother was never without some bump or bruise."

It was with a glance of double meaning that she looked at Eric, as she passed her hand over his face.

"But we have talked enough; now go. I must dress for dinner."

She kissed his forehead, and he left her; but outside the door, he stopped and said, with folded hands:—

"I thank you, Eternal Powers, that you have left me my mother: she will save us all."

CHAPTER VII.

STATISTICS OF LOVE.

When they assembled again at the villa, the Doctor chanced to be there. Or was it not mere chance? Did he desire to note accurately, once for all, the relation between Eric and Bella?

He saluted the Professorin with great respect; she said she must confess that her husband, who made a point of mentioning frequently his distant friends, had never uttered, to the best of her recollection, the name of Doctor Richard.

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"And yet I was a friend of his," cried the Doctor in a loud tone.

After a while, he said in a low voice: "I must be honest with you, and tell you that I was only a little acquainted with your husband; but your father-in-law was my teacher. I introduced myself, however, to your son as the friend of your husband, because this seemed to me the readiest way to be of service to him, exposed as he is here, in the house and in its connections, to a variety of perils."

The Professorin warmly expressed her obligation to him, but her heart contracted again. This man had evidently alluded to Bella.

The Artist who had painted the portrait of the Wine-count's daughter was there; and soon the Priest came too, and regret was expressed that the Major could not be present, having gone to celebrate St. John's day in the neighborhood; he considered everything appertaining to the Masonic order in the nature of a military duty.

The company in general were in a genial mood. The Doctor asked the painter how he got along with his picture of Potiphar's wife.

The Artist invited the company to visit shortly the studio, which Herr von Endlich had fitted up for him for the summer months.

"Strange!" cried the Doctor. "We always speak of Potiphar's wife, and we don't know what her own name was; she takes the name of her husband, and you artists don't refrain from painting nude beauties with more or less fidelity. The chaste Joseph presents always an extremely contemptible figure, and perhaps because the world thinks that the chaste Joseph is always a more or less contemptible figure. Æneas and Dido are just such another constellation, but Æneas is not looked upon in so contemptuous a way as the Egyptian Joseph."

It was painful to hear the Doctor talk in this style.

The Priest said: —

"This narrative in the Old Testament is the correlative to that of the adulteress in the New; and after a thousand years, the harmony is rendered complete. The Old Testament strikes the discordant note; the New Testament brings it to the accordant pitch."

Clodwig was exceedingly delighted with this exposition; there was something of the student-nature in him, and he was always enlivened and made happy by any new view, and any enlargement of his knowledge.

"Herr Priest, and you also, Frau Professorin," cried the Doctor, who was to-day more talkative than ever, "with your great experience of life, you two could render a great service to a friend of mine."

"I?" the priest asked.

"And I?" asked the Professorin.

"Yes, you. Our century has entered upon a wholly new investigation of the laws of the world; and things, circumstances, sentiments, which one would not believe could ever be caught, are now bagged in the statistical net, and must be shown to be conformable to laws. Nothing has been esteemed freer and more incalculable, even incomprehensible, than love and matrimony, and yet there are now exact statistical tables of these; there is an iron law, by which the number of divorces in a year is determined. My friend now goes a step farther, and from facts of his own observation has deduced the conclusion, that marriages in which the man is considerably older than the wife, present a greater average of happy unions than so-called love-matches; now, Herr Priest, and you also, Frau Professorin, think over the list of persons you are acquainted with, and ask yourselves whether you find any confirmation of this law."

The Professorin was silent, but the Priest said that religion alone consecrated marriage; religion alone gave humility, which was the only sure basis of all beautiful intercourse between men themselves, and also between man and God.

The Priest succeeded, continuing the conversation, in diverting it entirely from the subject so flippantly introduced.

Sonnenkamp stated that the Major wished to have a grand masonic celebration in the spacious knight's hall of the castle, when it was completed; he asked in what relation the reigning Prince stood towards Masonry.

Clodwig replied that he himself had formerly belonged to the order, and that the Prince was at present a protector of the brotherhood, without being a member.

The conversation was carried on in groups, and they left the table in a cheerful mood. The Doctor took leave.

It was now settled that the Aunt should go to Wolfsgarten; and, in order to give her time to make preparation for leaving, Clodwig and Bella were to remain over night and take her in the carriage with them on the morrow.

Bella was in very good spirits, and, on Sonnenkamp's offering to present her with a

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parrot, requested that it might be the wildest one, which she promised to tame.

In the evening Roland urged them to take a sail with him on the Rhine. The Aunt and Bella went together; Fräulein Perini withdrew with Frau Ceres; the Professorin remained with Clodwig, and Sonnenkamp excused himself to forward some unfinished letters.

On the boat there were laughter and merriment, in which Bella joined, dipping her hand into the water and playing with her wedding-ring, which she moved up and down on the finger, repeatedly immersing her hand in the Rhine.

"Do you understand what the Doctor was aiming at?" she asked Eric.

"If I had been willing to understand, I should have been obliged to feel offended," he replied.

"Now we are speaking of the Doctor," resumed Bella, "there is one thing I must tell you that I have forgotten to mention before. The Doctor is doughty, unadulterated virtue; but this rough virtue once wanted to pay court to me, and I showed him how ridiculous he made himself. It may very well be, that the man doesn't speak well of me. You ought to know the reason."

Eric was moved in his inmost soul. What does this mean? May this be a wily move to neutralize the physician's opinion? He could not determine.

After a while, Bella asked, —

"Can you tell me why I am now so often low-spirited?"

"The more highly-endowed natures, Aristotle says, are always melancholy," replied Eric.

Bella caught her breath; that was altogether too pedantic an answer to suit her.

They did not succeed in keeping up any continued conversation, but Bella said at one time abruptly to Eric, —

"The visit here of your mother vexes me."

"What! vexes you?"

"Yes, it wounds me that this man with his gold should be able to change the position of people, as he does."

Eric had abundant matter of thought in this casual remark.

"You have the happiness to be greatly beloved," said Bella suddenly. Eric looked up alarmed, glancing towards Roland, and Bella continued aloud, —

"Your mother loves you deeply." After a time, she said in a low tone to herself, but Eric heard it, —

"Me no one loves; I know why, — no, I don't know why."

Eric looked her full in the face, then seized an oar and made the water fly with his rowing.

Meanwhile, the mother and Clodwig sat together, and the former expressed her joy that Eric had been thrown into the society of men of such well-tried experience; in former times, a man could have completed his culture by intercourse with women; but now, that end could be attained only by intercourse with noble men.

They soon passed into those mutual unfoldings of views which are like a perpetual greeting, when two persons have pursued the same spiritual ends apart from each other, in wholy different relations of life, and yet with the same essential tendencies.

The Professorin had known Clodwig's first wife, and recalled her to remembrance in affectionate words. Clodwig looked round to see if Bella was near, for he had never spoken before her of his former wife. It was pure calumny, when it was said that he had promised Bella never to speak of the deceased, for Clodwig was not so weak, nor Bella so hard, as this; it was only out of consideration for her, that he never did it.

In low, half-whispered tones, the conversation flowed on; and finding in each other the same fundamental trait, they agreed that it was happy for human beings here below to pass lightly over what was untoward in their lot, and retain in lively remembrance only what was felicitous.

"Yes," said the Professorin in confirmation, "my husband used often to say, that a Lethe stream flows through the soul buoyant with life, so that the past is forgotten."

It was a season of purest interchange of thought, and of true spiritual communion, for Clodwig and the mother. They were like two beings in the spirit-world, surveying calmly and clearly what had passed in this state of existence. There was nothing painful in the mutual awakening of their recollections, but rather an internal perception of the inexhaustible fulness of life; on this elevated height the sound of desire and plaint was no longer heard, and the individual life with all its personal relations was dissolved into the one element of universal being.

But now there was a diversion, and Clodwig expressed regret at having lived so much a mere spectator, and that he had, without throwing himself into the great current of influence, waited passively in the confident expectation that the idea which was stirring in the world would accomplish, of itself, its own grand fulfilment. He expressed his satisfaction that the young

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men of to-day were of a different stamp, and that Eric was to him an inspiring representative of youth as thoughtful as it was bold, as moderate as it was active.

Bella entered just as they happened to refer again to the statistics of love. She was pale, but Clodwig did not perceive it; sitting down near them in silence, she requested them to continue their conversation; but neither the Professorin nor Clodwig resumed the interrupted theme.

Clodwig spoke of Aunt Claudine, asked after her favorite pursuits, and was glad to own a fine telescope, which she could use at Wolfsgarten.

After a brief rest, Bella left them and went into the park.

CHAPTER VIII.

A STRUGGLE BETWEEN DUTY AND PASSION.

"I MUST speak with you this evening in the park, under the weeping ash," Eric had said to Bella as they were getting out of the boat.

"This evening?" she asked.

"Yes."

"And in the park, under the weeping ash?"

"Yes."

She had of her own accord placed her arm in his, and they walked together in silence to the villa; then she relinquished his arm, and went straight to Clodwig and the Mother.

She knew not what she desired here, but she was happy, or rather soothed, when she saw them sitting so confidentially together. Yes, she thought, every one who gives an ear to him, and returns a stimulating reply occasionally, is as much to him as I.

She rose and went into the park; she walked about restlessly, knowing that Eric must get released from Roland, in order to keep the appointment with her. But she had no idea how hard it was for him to effect this; not so much because Roland was not obedient, and mindful every hour of the task set him, but because Eric was inwardly disturbed that he was obliged to assign to his pupil as a duty and a theme some noble thought, some lesson, some subject of study, merely to become temporarily freed from his presence. The book he gave him, the place he selected for him to read until his return, appeared to him perverted to a wrong use, dishonored and profaned; yet nothing else could be done. It was a bitter experience, but it was the last time; he would come out from this final interview pure and strong, and have a plain and straight path before him.

He became composed with this thought, and entered the park. He found Bella on the seat upon the height; she had evidently been weeping freely.

Hearing his step, she removed the handkerchief from her eyes. "You have been weeping?"

"Yes, for your mother, for myself, for us all! O, how often have I heard your mother ridiculed, blamed, pitied, and despised, for following the impulse of her heart and the man of her choice. For some time the saying was, To live on love and eight hundred thalers. She is now more highly favored than any of us. With blessed satisfaction she surveys now the past, and looks forward to the future in her son, and what are her deriders? Puppets, dolls,— gossipping, music-making, dancing, chattering, scandal-making dolls! They turn up their noses at the man who has become so rich on the labor of slaves, and our aristocratic fathers sell their children, and the children sell themselves, for a high rank in society, for horses and carriages, for finery and villas. The nobility, the poor nobility, is the inherited curse from ancestral pride, from slavery to the ancestral idea! A peasant woman, who gleans barefooted in the stubble-field, is happier and freer than the lady who is driven through the streets in her carriage, leaning back and cooling herself with her fan."

"I have one request," began Eric in a constrained voice; "will you bestow upon me one hour of your life?"

"One hour?"

"Yes. Will you listen to me?"

"I am attentive." As she gazed at him, her eye-brows seemed to grow larger and larger, the corners of her mouth to be drawn slowly down, and her lips to open as if parched with a feverish heat; nothing was wanting but the wings upon her head, and the snaky heads knotted under her chin, to give the perfect Medusa-look.

Eric was for an instant petrified; then collecting himself, he continued: —

"Two questions now rend my heart; one is, Has the violence of love taken from me life, study, and the power of abstract thought? The other is, Must a child of humanity, because destiny has once decided for him, become a lifelong victim to this determination? And these two questions resolve themselves into one, just as those snaky heads form one knot under the chin of the Medusa."

"Go on!" urged Bella.

"Well, then, there was one hour when I would like to have said to the beautiful wife sitting before me, 'I love thee!' and I would

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have embraced and kissed her, but then," — Eric pressed his hand upon his heart. and gnashed his teeth, — "but that hour over, I should have put a bullet through my brain!"

Bella let her eyes fall, and Eric went on: "One hour, and then my peace was gone; I had nothing left. I could not sleep. I could not think. This could not last. I lost myself, and what did I gain? I saw all that this love devastated, and could it be love? No. Could I take it lightly like others, it would be light. But why is this the only thing to be made light of? Why is not the ideal of life also to be made light of, and why is not all feeling only a plausible lie?"

In a hoarse voice he added: —

"But I do not believe that love has the right to lay everything in ruins; but then perhaps it may be said, it is not real love. Pluck up heart, look at the world for yourself, see how pleasantly, respectably, and shrewdly it lies, the women tricked out with artificial beauty, and the men with superficial knowledge. Do you see the abyss on whose brink I stood? And here I said to myself, We are placed in the world in order to live, and knowledge and culture have been given us that we may get from them life and not death. And how could I look a noble man in the face, how could I look up to the sun in heaven, how was I to educate a human being, to stand erect in the world, to abhor crime, to discern the holy; how was I to take the word mother upon my lips, with the consciousness that I was myself the vilest of all, and that there was no moment in which I, and another also, must not tremble, and be filled with cowardly fear and despair."

Eric paused and placed his hand on his forehead; his voice choked, tears stood in his eyes.

"Go on!" cried Bella, "I am listening."

"It is well. This once do I speak thus to you, and only this once. You have courage to hear the truth. Our relation is not love, must not be love; for love cannot thrive on murder, hypocrisy, and treachery. I clasp your hand — no, I clasp it not, for I know I could not let it go, if I did. Here I stand — I speak to you, you listen to me — I speak to you, as if I were miles away, as if I were dead; there must be distance, there must be death, before there is any life."

"What do you mean?" interposed Bella.

She looked at Eric's hand as if he were about to draw a weapon from his bosom.

Breathing deep, he went on: "It must be possible for human beings who have been made conscious of where they are, to find again the right path from which they have wandered. My friend! you are happy if you understand the happiness, and you can and must learn to appreciate it; and I am happy. Howsoever my heart may be shattered, I know I shall come to understand my duty and my happiness. I have been, heretofore, so proud, I thought I had mastered the world and brought it under my feet, and so did you; and that we have met, is to be not for our destruction, but rather for our awakening into a new life.

"I foresee that the days will come when we shall coldly extend to each other our hands, and say, or even not say, though we feel and know it, that there was one pure hour, an hour won by a severe struggle, when we were exalted in our own souls, and because we held each other so highly, we did not debase nor degrade ourselves. This hour is hard, is overwhelming; but what is hard and overwhelming now, will be, in the future, tender and full of restoring strength.

"We would hold each other high, that we may not destroy the laws of righteous living. And here is life's duty. My friend, it was a saying of my father, The man of understanding must be able to obey the command of duty, with the same glow of zeal that others obey the command of passion. So must it be. The stars shine over our heads, I look upon you as upon a star that shines in its purity and in its ordained orbit. Ah! I do not know what I am saying. Enough! Let me now bid you farewell; when we meet again —"

"No, stay here!" Bella cried, grasping his arm, which she let go immediately, as if she had touched a snake.

She withdrew two steps, and threw back her head, saying: —

"I thank you."

Eric wanted to reply, but it was better that he should say nothing; he was about to go away in silence, when Bella cried: —

"One question! Is it true that you saw Manna Sonnenkamp, before you came here?"

"Yes."

"And you love her, and are here on her account?"

"No."

"I believe you, and I thank you."

There seemed to be in this utterance something consolatory to her, that she had not been sacrificed to love for another. She looked wildly around, moved her head right and left, and when she had become calm again, she said: —

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"You are right. It is well."

She seemed to be looking for something to give to Eric, without being able to find it; and now, as if she were giving utterance to a thought that had long lain upon her mind, and which anxiety for his welfare forced from her, she cried, —

"Be warned! Be on your guard against my brother; he can be terrible."

Eric went away; it was a hard matter to return to Roland, but he must.

He sat still by Roland's side for a short time, with his hands over his eyes; the light pained them, and he did not venture to look at Roland.

Then a servant, came with the message that the Count and the Countess were going to take their departure at once; Eric and Roland could bid them good-bye in the court-yard.

They went down, and heard that, contrary to the original plan, they were to set out immediately, and send the next day a carriage for Aunt Claudine.

Bella extended her gloved right hand to Eric, saying in a low tone: —

"Good-night, Herr Captain."

The carriage drove off.

CHAPTER IX.

THOUGHTS OF THE RELEASED.

Bella sat quietly as she rode homewards with her husband. After a long silence, Count Clodwig said, —

"My heart is full of happiness and joy; it is a real blessedness to see a woman who is sixty years old, and who has never had a thought that she needed to repent of."

Bella looked up quickly. "What does this mean? Has he any idea of what has transpired?

"That cannot be; he would not, in that case, have referred to it. But perhaps it is his lofty manner of giving a hint towards a life of purity."

She was fearful of betraying herself if she made no answer, and yet she was at a loss what to say. Making a violent effort of self-restraint, she said at last, —

"This lady is very happy in her poverty; she has a noble, highly-cultivated son."

Clodwig now looked round as if some one had pulled upon him. Could Bella have had any notion that the thought had crossed his mind, — What if this wife — and then Eric be thy son?

He was better off than Bella, for there was no necessity of his making any reply; but he inwardly reproached himself for having had the faintest impression of such a thought.

They drove along in silence; there was oneness of feeling, and yet each had saddening thoughts; for the rest of the way not a word was spoken. It seemed to Bella as if some mighty force must come and bear her away into chaos, into annihilation. The carriage rattled so strangely, the wheels grated, and the maid and the coachman looked to her like goblins, and the flitting shadows of the moon like pictures in a dream, and the carriage with its inmates like a monster; anger, shame, pride, humiliation, were stormily coursing through her heart, that had not yet been calmed.

She was enraged with herself that she, who was mature in worldly experience, had allowed herself to be carried away by such a girlish infatuation, for that was the name she still gave it. And had not her self-love been wounded? Was not this the first time that she had ever stretched out her hand without its being grasped?

It came across her that Eric might have overstated his love to her, in order to lessen the feeling of shame on her part. As she thought it over, it seemed to her that she detected something unnatural in his tone, something forced and constrained.

She thought again of Eric. Where is he now? Is he talking with any one? He certainly suffers deeply; he has saved himself and thee. Her thoughts were like a whirlwind. Now she scornfully exulted. It was only a trifling jest, an experiment, a bold play! She, Bella, the strong, had only tried to bring a young man to his knees before her, and she would have thrust him away with contempt if she had succeeded. She can say this — who can contradict her? Her whole past life was good evidence in her favor, and yet she felt ashamed of this lie.

But what is now to be done? she asked again. She is simply to be quiet; she will meet the man with indifference; her last word to him was to warn him against any attachment to Manna. There was the whole! That was the pivot on which turned the whole bold game. She promised herself to root out of her soul every passionate feeling, every violent emotion. She was now grateful to the destiny that had aroused within her the strong forces of nature — her virtue had now been tried in the fire.

She took the veil from her face, and looked up at the stars. They should be witnesses that all immoderate, all childish allurements, that were unworthy of her, should be put far away. Now she silently thought of what Eric had said, "For this

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end are culture and knowledge bestowed upon us, that we should rule over ourselves."

As they were going up the hill on which Wolfsgarten was situated, there came over her a feeling of imprisonment; she thought her hands were tied, and she put them outside of her mantle. Clodwig thought she was seeking his hand; he took hers and held it with a gentle pressure.

They reached Wolfsgarten in silence, and Clodwig said, as they stood in the brightly lighted garden-saloon, —

"We can be silent in each other's company; and this is the fairest comradeship, when each one abides in himself and yet is with another."

Bella nodded, looking at the whole surroundings with a wondering glance. What is all this? To whom does all this belong? What power has brought her here? Where has she been? How would it be now, here alone with her husband, if ——

It seemed to her that she must fall on her knees, grasp his hand, and beg for forgiveness.

But it is better, she thought, not for herself — she believed that she was ready to humble herself to the utmost, — but better for him not to know anything of what had transpired. It ought to be concealed from him. She bowed her head, and Clodwig kissed her brow, saying: —

"Your brow is hot."

Each retired to rest.

Bella sent her maid away and undressed without her aid to-night.

After Clodwig and Bella had driven off, the Mother went to the vine-embowered house with Eric. She led him by the hand like a little child; she felt his hand tremble, but she said nothing; when they had reached the steps, she said, —

"Eric, kiss me!"

Eric understood her meaning; she wanted to see if he could kiss her with pure lips. He kissed her. Mother and son uttered no word.

Every pain was removed from Eric's whirling brain. And truth requires it to be said, that the most painful thought was, that a feeling of regret had come over Eric, a short time previously. The tempter suggested that he had been too scrupulous, too conscientious. He had thrust from him a beautiful woman, who was ready to clasp him with loving arms. When he surprised himself in these thoughts, he was profoundly wretched. All pride, all self-congratulation, and all exalted feelings of purity, were extinguished; he was a sinner without the sin. He had believed himself raised upon a lofty eminence; he had even represented his love to Bella in stronger colors than the facts warranted. Now there was a recoil, and the whole power of the rejected and disdained love avenged itself upon his doubly sinful head.

For a long time he wandered about in the quiet night.

The soul has its feverish condition from wounds as well as the body, and equally requires a soothing treatmeat.

Eric had amputated a part of his soul in order to save the rest, and he suffered from the pain. But as the dew fell upon tree and grass, and upon the face of Eric, so fell a dew upon his spirit.

The self-exaltation of virtue was now taken out of him, washed away by his double repentance, and he was now again a child.

As he looked back to the vine-embowered house, he thought: I will, as a man, preserve within me the child; and still further he thought: Thou hast withdrawn thyself from temptation through the consciousness of duty; be tender towards the rich and great, to whom everything is offered, to whom so much is allowed; the consciousness of duty does not restrain them so absolutely as it does him who is in the world, him who must help and be helped by others, and who has lost everything when he has lost himself.

He returned home late in the evening; and at night he dreamed that he was struggling in the midst of the floods of the Rhine, and he, the strong swimmer, was not able to contend against the waves.

He shrieked, but a steam-tug drowned his cry, and the helmswoman of a boat looked down upon him with contempt — and all at once it was not the helmswoman, but a maiden form with wings and two brightly-gleaming eyes.

CHAPTER X.

THE GUARDIAN AND HELPER.

Early in the morning, a carriage from Wolfsgarten came for Aunt Claudine and the parrot.

For the thirty years since her marriage with the Professor, Frau Dournay had not passed a day without her sister-in-law; now, for the first time, she was letting her go from her. It seemed to both of them hardly conceivable that they could live apart from each other, but it had been decided upon, and must be.

Sonnenkamp was most politely attentive; he charged the Aunt to consider his house her home, and not to remain more than a

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few days as a guest at Wolfsgarten. He gave a basket full of carefully-covered grapes and bananas into the coachman's charge; the parrot's cage was on the seat near Aunt Claudine.

The parrot screamed and scolded as they drove off, and kept it up all the way, not liking, apparently, to leave Villa Sonnenkamp.

Herr Sonnenkamp proposed a drive to the Professorin, to help her forget the parting, but she answered, that not by diversion but by quiet reflection, can we compose and reconcile ourselves to the inevitable. Roland looked at her in surprise; these were Eric's thoughts, almost his very words.

Several days passed quietly at the villa, which was hardly quitted even for visits to the vine-covered cottage. Bella's visit had brought a disquiet to the house, which still hung over them all, and they realized it afresh as they constantly missed the Aunt; Bella had taken something which seemed an essential part of their life. And besides, the house was again without any sound of music.

Eric and Roland were more industrious than ever, for the Mother had asked if she might not be with them in the study-hours, saying that she had never heard any of Eric's teaching. Eric knew that she wished to help him to keep a strict guard over himself; for though not a word had been said, she felt that something must have passed between him and Bella. And she not only wanted to watch over her son at every hour, but to inspire him by her presence to keep true to his duty to Roland.

So she sat with them from early morning through much of the day, breathing low, and not even allowing herself any needle-work; and Eric and Roland felt a peculiar of a calm mind, of deep insight, and wide incitement in the presence of a third person, views. At first Roland often looked up at her, but she always shook her head, to remind him that he must give his whole mind to what he was about, and take no notice of her. Eric was completely free from the first hour, when he had caught himself giving such a turn to the lesson that his mother might learn something new, and had met her gaze, which said,—That's not the thing to be considered. He returned to his simple plan, without regard to his mother's presence. She was pleased with the methodical way in which Eric gave his instruction, and knew how to keep his pupil's attention. She listened with pleasure, one day, when he said that Indolence liked to say:—Nothing depends on me, a single individual; but, a nation and humanity consist of individuals; a scholar learns through single hours and days; a fruit ripens by single sunbeams; everything is individual, but the collected individuals make up the great whole. Eric had prepared himself, and read apposite passages from Cicero, and from Xenophon's Memorabilia. Roland must feel that he had the fellowship of the noblest spirits. But when they were alone, his mother said,—"I think that in illustrating everything and trying to give your pupil knowledge, you weaken and loosen his firm hold on fundamental principles."

Eric felt a shock of disappointment; he had hoped that his mother would express entire pleasure, and she was finding fault instead; but he controlled himself, and she continued, smiling:—

"I cannot help laughing, because my two points of criticism are really one and the same, looked at on two sides. The one view is this, that it seems to me dangerous to give your pupil, as you do, just what he desires; you follow the devious path of a young discursive mind, and just there lies the danger of private instruction. I mean, in this way it pampers the youthful mind by giving it only what it wishes for, not what it ought to have. The discipline of a definite course of study lies in the necessity of taking up and carrying forward what the connected plan requires, and not what may suit the fancy; this fits one for life too, for life does not always bring what we long for, but what we need and must have."

"And what is your second point?" asked Eric, as his mother paused.

"My second point is only a repetition of the first. I remember your father's saying once, that the first and only true support, or rather the very foundation of education, must be:—'Thou shalt, and thou shalt not; straight forward without comment, without explanation, without illustration.' Now ask yourself whether you are not weakening his character. When our Roland is brought into a conflict, I don't know whether knowledge will help him, rather than the ancient command: 'Thou shalt and thou shalt not.' I only say this to you that you may think it over; others may praise you, I must warn you. I can say, though, that you have attained one important point; the boy has a holy reverence for the spirit of the Past."

Eric grasped his mother's hand, and walked on sometime in silence. Then he explained to her how he wished to give Roland not only knowledge, but a firm foundation of self-reliance, on which his life might rest.

"My son," replied his mother, "you have set yourself a difficult task; you want

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to accomplish a three-fold work at once; that is not possible. Listen to me patiently. You want to complete and perfect a neglected education; you want to lead to higher aims, gaining at the same time a moral foothold and moral elevation, without using the means handed down to you; and, finally, you want to train a youth, who knows his own wealth, to be a useful, unselfish, even self-sacrificing man. Now why do you laugh, pray? I will stop, though I might add, that you want to make a boy without a family affectionate, and a boy without a country patriotic. Now tell me why you laugh."

"Forgive me, mother; there's reason in your being called Professorin; you have discoursed like a Professor from his desk. But let me tell you that the two-fold or the five-fold task is only a simple one in the end. I confess I have often said to myself that I might make it easier, but then I would ask myself whether this was not an attempt to excuse my own desire of comfort. I must make the experiment of placing a youth upon the platform of acting freely from —— "

"Reason?" responded the mother. "Reason may give composure, but not happiness nor blessedness; reason may not be the nourishment which suits the young spirit. Remember, my son, that meat is good food, but we do not feed a new-born child on meat instead of milk. Do you understand what I mean?"

"Yes; you mean that religion is the mother's milk of the spirit."

"Exactly," said the Mother, in triumph. "Your father always said that no man had ever produced any great work, or accomplished any great deed, who did not believe in God; God is the highest object of imaginative thought. So long as philosophy cannot show a moral law which can be written, concisely and with perfect clearness, upon two tables of stone, education must make its progress through religion."

"'Mother," answered Eric, "we believe in God more truly than those who would confine him within the limits of a book, of a church, or of a special form of worship."

"Ah," said his mother, "let us drop the subject. Do you see that butterfly, flitting in great circles against the window pane? The butterfly takes the glass, from its transparency, to be the open air, and thinks that he can pass through it, but dashes his head at last against the glass wall that seemed to be nothing but air. But enough, I am not strong enough for you. If your father still lived, he could help you as no one else can."

The conversation, now turning on the father's death, wandered away from the previous subject.

CHAPTER XI.

AN EXTRAORDINARY SCHOOL-COMMITTEE.

Frau Ceres was jealous because the Professorin devoted less time to her, and surprised them by suddenly expressing the desire to be present at the lessons, saying that she had more need of instruction than the rest. And Sonnenkamp also betook himself to Roland's room. He could never be idle, and so, when he did not smoke, he had the habit of whittling all sorts of figures out of a small piece of wood; and he was especially fond of cutting into grotesque shapes fragments of grape-vine roots. This was the only way he could sit and listen.

Eric saw that his instruction was interfered with by this heterogeneous assemblage. The Mother understood his disquiet, without a word being said, and staid away from the lessons. Frau Ceres and Herr Sonnenkamp soon did the same.

While Eric was enabled to banish, by a strict fulfilment of his duties, every trace of the disturbing element introduced by Bella, the Mother was full of restlessness. She had attained what had been the object of her strongest wishes, access to a large garden of plants and unlimited sway therein, and yet she was not quite content.

One morning, as she was walking early in the park with her son, she said: —

"I have discovered something new in myself: I have no talent for being a guest."

Eric interposed no questions, for he knew that she would reach the goal, even if she took a roundabout way. The Mother continued: —

"I have the feeling that I must bring something to pass; I cannot be forever a passive recipient; and here is the special danger of riches. The rich look upon themselves as guests in this world; they themselves have nothing to do, and others must do everything for them. I tell thee, my dear son, that I cannot stand it, I must do something. You men, you can work, create, influence, and renew your life by what you do, while we women can only recreate and restore our life by loving."

Eric suggested that she accomplished her part by simply being, but the Mother very energetically responded: —

"I am always vexed with Schiller for this: he should not have said, it isn't like him to write, 'Ordinary natures pay with what they do; noble ones with what they

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are.' That sounds like a carte blanche for all do-nothings, with or without coronets upon their seals."

Eric held up to her the satisfaction arising from her influence upon Frau Ceres; but the Mother shook her head without any remark.

She had placed great hopes in that, but such an enigmatical and incomprehensible person was presented to her view, that she seemed to herself wholly useless. She would not acknowledge to her son that the house had something oppressive to her; that the family had all its glory and pride in external possessions, so that everything here appeared external, directed by alien hands, and altogether destitute of any strength developed from within.

Fräulein Perini spoke always of Frau Ceres as "the dear sufferer." From what was Frau Ceres suffering?

The Professorin had once lightly touched upon the thought how greatly Frau Ceres must miss her daughter; when, with eyes sparkling like those of a snake as it suddenly darts up its head, she sent Fräulein Perini, who was at hand, into the garden; she then said to the Professorin, looking timidly round: —

"He is not to blame; I, only I. I wished to punish him when I said that to my child; but I did not mean she should go away."

The Professorin begged that she would confide the whole to her, but Frau Ceres laughed like a person wholly beside herself.

"No, no, I shall not say it again, and certainly not to you."

The distress which the Professorin had experienced at the first interview with Frau Ceres was felt anew. She believed now that she knew the suffering of the dark-eyed woman, who, sometimes listless, and sometimes restless as a lizard, was troubled by a thought which she could not reveal, and could not wholly keep back.

Like a child to whom a story is told, she was urged by Frau Ceres to tell her over and over again about the court fetes, which alone seemed to awaken any interest. Frau Ceres was delighted to hear the same things repeated.

But the mother took care to show that a princess has a special employment for every hour, and that a regular performance of duty was of great importance. She spoke earnestly, and came back often to the consideration, that a woman like Frau Ceres, born in a Republic, could have not the remotest conception of all this, and that it was like being suddenly removed into another century.

"I understand everything that you and your son say," Frau Ceres stated, "but what other people say, except the Major, I hear it indeed, but I don't know where I am. Just think, I was afraid of you at first."

"Of me? No one was ever afraid of me before."

"I will tell you about it some other time. Ah, I am sick, I am always sick."

The Mother did not succeed in arousing Frau Ceres out of her life of mere alternate sleeping and waking.

Sonnenkamp met the Mother with demonstrations of deepest respect, and seemed to practise upon her his airs and attitudes of genteel behavior. He delicately hinted that he had faithfully kept the agreement, and had never asked her what his wife said and desired; and now he would only beg to be permitted to make one inquiry, whether Frau Ceres had never spoken of Manna.

"Certainly, but very briefly."

"And may I not be allowed to know what this brief communication was?"

"I don't know myself; it is still a riddle. But, I beseech you, do not lead me to disloyalty and breach of trust."

"Breach of trust?" cried Sonnenkamp with trembling lips.

"Ah, it was not the right word. Your wife has confided nothing to me, but I believe,— I pray you not to mistake me,— I suspect, she is secretly afraid of Fräulein Perini, or is vexed or angry with her. As I said before, I am very far from meaning to blame Fräulein Perini, and I almost repent of having said as much as I have."

"You can be at rest on that point. My wife would like to send Fräulein Perini out of the house ten times every day, and ten times every day to call her back again. There is no person, not even yourself, who is more needful to her and more useful than Fräulein Perini." The Professorin longed to be out of the house, and she could find no adequate reason for the deep hold which the desire had taken upon her. She had no desire to be made the depositary of secrets, nor to solve riddles, and yet she was incessantly occupied with the thought of the daughter of the house. A child, a grown-up girl, whom such a family abandoned, perhaps this maiden was a charge for her; but how it was to be, she could not perceive, and yet the thought would not leave her.

She wanted to question the Major. Clodwig, and Bella; and she would even have liked to have recourse to Pranken, but

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Pranken had not been visible for several weeks. She got Joseph to show her Manna's room one day; and while there, it seemed to her as if the dear child were calling her, and as if it were her duty to lend her a helping hand.

She wrote a letter to the Superior, informing her that she would pay her a visit at the first opportunity.

CHAPTER XII.

FRAU PETRA.

When Sonnenkamp was alone in the garden, in the hot-houses, in the work-room, or his seed-room, he wore perpetually a complacent, triumphant smile, often congratulating himself upon his success in making persons and circumstances play into his hands, ruling, bending, and directing them, just as he did the fruit in the garden.

The refractoriness and the indolence of Frau Ceres were very serviceable, at first, in lending to the whole establishment an air of respectability. It gave the appearance of self-containedness, as if there was no need of other people; as if there was everything in their own circle, and what should be superadded to this would be received graciously, but was not an absolute necessity. But this appearance of seclusion soon became a sort of mysterious riddle, and excited curiosity and scandal.

Sonnenkamp had foreseen this, but had not anticipated that this state of feeling would last so long. The shyness and reserve of the dwellers in the vicinity in forming any intimate relations with him, and their failure to visit him on familiar terms, gradually disturbed him. This distance must not be allowed to have too much weight, it had better not be noticed; and complaisance must be shown towards these who hold themselves thus distantly, and it must not be seen that their bearing is remarked at all.

The relation to Otto von Pranken had begun with the stable, but proceeding farther, by the connection of the families promised now a firm basis in the future. Until now, Sonnenkamp's house, park, and garden, considered as a whole, seemed like some isolated, alien, and extraneous plant within a flower-pot. Through Eric and his family the roots had begun to spread, and the plant to grow independently in the open ground.

The intimate relation with Clodwig and Bella, which Pranken had not been able to bring about, had been effected through Eric; and now the Professor's widow was to carry that still farther, by giving and receiving visits which would naturally unite the families.

Sonnenkamp very cautiously expressed to the Mother his regret, that his wife did not incline to keep up a neighborly acquaintance with the respectable families around. The Mother had a desire to get a look into the life of this part of the country, and to express thanks to those who had manifested so much friendliness towards her son. She wanted first to visit the house of the Doctor. Sonnenkamp suggested that she should then call upon the Justice's family. He placed his whole house at her disposal if she wished to make invitations.

One beautiful Sunday in the latter part of summer was fixed upon for visiting the neighborhood.

Frau Ceres had promised to go with them, but when the morning came for them to start, she declared that it was impossible. The Professorin now observed, for the first time, a spice of artfulness in her; she had consented, evidently, to avoid being urged; and now she planted herself upon her own will, without making any plea of ill health.

Fräulein Perini remained at home with her.

They drove first to Herr von Endlich's, although they might have known that the family were absent; they wanted only to leave their cards.

From Herr von Endlich's Sonnenkamp returned to the villa, and left Roland, Eric, and the Mother, to proceed to the town. He called out to them at parting, that they must take care not to drink all the wine that should be offered them.

And when the Mother was now driving with Eric and Roland, the thought occurred to her that she was not making these visits on her own account; but she was just as happy in making them as the representative of her friendly host.

Roland wished them to stop as they were going along, for they met Claus, the field-guard. Roland introduced him to Eric's mother; she extended her hand, and said she would soon give him a call.

Claus, looking very much gratified, and pointing to Roland, replied: —

"Yes, yes, if I had to turn out a grandmother for him, it would be nobody else but you."

They laughed, and drove on. When they reached the town, the bells of the newly-erected Protestant church were just ringing. It stood upon a hill, from which there was a wide view of the country around.

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The Mother stopped, and went with Eric and Roland into the church.

Roland had never been in a Protestant church while service was going on. The Mother requested him not to go in now, when she heard him say this, but to proceed directly with Eric to the town; he was bent, however, upon remaining with her.

They entered the simple, plain building just as the congregation was finishing the hymn. The Mother was pained to hear a discourse on eternal punishment, delivered in a high-pitched voice, and regretted in her own mind that she had yielded to Roland.

After they had taken a survey of the cheering landscape on coming out, the Mother took Roland's hand, saying: —

"When you are prepared for it, I shall make you acquainted with one of your countrymen, from whom you can get higher views."

"Is it Benjamin Franklin? I know him."

"No; the man I speak of is a preacher who died only a few years ago; a man of the deepest religious nature. I am glad to have known him personally; he has been a guest at our house, and I have taken him by the hand. He and your father, Eric, became intimate friends at once."

"Do you mean Theodore Parker?" inquired Eric.

"I mean him, and I feel elevated to have had such a man live with us."

"Why have you never spoken of this man?" said Roland, turning to Eric.

"Because I did not wish to interfere with the faith in which you were brought up."

Eric said this without meaning to reprove his mother, and yet she was alarmed when she heard his reply; she repeated, that Roland would learn about the man after his judgment had become more mature.

The mischief, however, had been done, of pointing out to the youth something which was now withheld from him; and as he had never been accustomed to being denied anything, he would now, as usual, be eager after what was forbidden, and if it was not given him, he would take secret measures to get it himself.

Eric and Roland received the salutation of many coming out of church. Eric introduced his mother to the School-director, the Forester, his wife and sister-in-law, who all accompanied the friends into the town. The walk along the public highway was pleasant; there is nothing, on the whole, like this pleasant mood with which a large number of persons of various condition and character return from church.

"Wasn't the Doctor's wife at church?" asked the Mother.

They told her that she never went on Sunday morning, but staid at home to comfort the country people who came early on Sunday; she often gave them simple household remedies, and arranged the order in which they should be admitted to the Doctor on his return.

Eric now heard, for the first time, that they called the Doctor's wife Frau Petra. She had something of St. Peter's office, the keeping of the door into the heavenly kingdom of healing.

They entered the Doctor's house. The cleanliness of the entry floor and steps was notable as usual, and on the walls good pictures were hanging, no one of which seemed to owe its position to chance. Green climbing-plants were standing upon pier-tables, and sending out their tendrils in all directions. In the sitting-room the work-table was placed under the window, before which was a street-mirror; and on the table itself stood a camelia in full bloom. They heard the Doctor's wife saying in the next room, —

"Yes, good Nanny, you are talking the whole time about religion and conformity to the will of God, and now you are clear down in the depths of despair, and out of patience, and unwilling to take kindly advice. My husband can give medicine, but you must give yourself love and patience. And you, Anna, you give your child too much to eat and then you have to keep coming for help. One can't get understanding at the apothecary's. And you, Peter, you go home and apply a bandage wet with warm vinegar."

Nothing further was heard. Apparently the servant had come in and announced the arrival of the visitors.

The door opened, and the Doctor's wife entered. She gave a hearty greeting to the Mother, and ordered the servant to bring a bottle of wine and three glasses. In spite of the Mother's refusal, the gentlemen must drink.

When the Professorin lauded the beneficent influence of the Doctor's wife, the latter at once accepted the praise saying, —

"One can learn something in more than forty years' experience, such as I have had. At first I shuddered, but I was always angry with myself for it; now I have learned from my husband what stands me in the best stead."

"What is that?"

"Rude bluntness, the only effectual

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thing. Each one is thinking about himself, but why talk about myself?"

She expressed her satisfaction at becoming acquainted with the Mother. The two ladies smiled when Roland said:—

"We went to the church, and from there we came to you, and we think we are much better off here."

The wine came, and Eric and Roland drank the health of the Doctor's substitute. Then they went to the study of the Physician, and Eric explained the anatomical charts to Roland.

The Mother urged the Doctor's wife, with whom she was visiting, to return her visit soon, and expressed the hope of great good to result to Frau Ceres from her resolute nature.

"I should be afraid of being too blunt," answered the Doctor's wife, whose nature was in reality exceedingly gentle and considerate.

"I trust you will pardon my boldness; is it true that Manna is to be taken from the convent, and have her education completed by you?"

The Mother was amazed. What was to her only a vague thought, was the gossip of the neighborhood. She could not imagine what had given rise to it, and the Doctor's wife could not tell where she had heard it.

When the Mother now made particular inquiries about Manna, the Doctor's wife said that Roland was the only one of Sonnenkamp's family whom she knew. She knew nothing at all about Manna; but Lina, the Justice's daughter, had been her friend, and from her something definite might be learned.

The Physician joined them, but did not stay long. He waited only to get, as soon as he could, the report from his wife.

The Mother took leave, and Frau Petra did not urge her to remain, saying that she had still to speak with several of the patients before they went.

In lively spirits they left the house.

They had to wait longer at the Justice's, for wife and daughter must first make their toilet. When they finally appeared, they had many apologies to make for the disorderly appearance of the room, and for their own hurried toilet; yet dress and room were as neat and pretty as one could wish.

The messenger was sent after the Justice, who was taking his Sunday's glass; and when at last the Professorin had taken a seat in the corner of the sofa, where one could hardly find room among the embroidered cushions, a pleasant conversation ensued. The Justice's wife had adroitly made mention of her father, whom the Mother knew, and they gradually established an agreeable intercourse, after the first awkward preliminaries were all over. The Professorin knew how to draw Lina out, and was greatly pleased with her bright description of the convent-life. Lina was encouraged by this, so that she became more and more animated and communicative, to her mother's great astonishment.

The Justice made his appearance. He had evidently swallowed down his glass hastily, for nothing ought to be left unfinished. He shook the hand of the Professorin longer and harder than was at all necessary, and assured her humorously — humor seemed very odd on the little man's grave face — of his magisterial protection. He then gave an account to Eric and Roland of the Pole's having broken out of the House of Correction, and of their having put up an advertisement for his apprehension, but they would be glad never to see him again.

The Justice's wife and Lina put on their hats, and went with their guests by a circuitous path along the Rhine to the house of the School-director, not without some consciousness, perhaps, of the good appearance they were making. Eric walked with the Justice's wife, the Justice joined Roland, and Lina went with the Professorin.

Lina began of her own accord to talk of Manna, of her present melancholy, and of her former liveliness; she had cherished the most enthusiastic love towards her father, so that it seemed as if she could not leave him for a single day; and Lina begged the Mother to use her influence to have Manna return once more.

The Mother carefully refrained from making any inquiries, but it struck her strangely that from these visits, made only out of politeness, a new duty seemed to be unfolding before her.

If she had been able to imagine that she was only used by Sonnenkamp to play into his own hands, she would have been still more astonished at the various phases which one simple occurrence may assume.

They did not find the family of the School-director or of the Forester at home; as they were returning in the carriage and driving by the Doctor's house, his wife was standing in the doorway; she called to them to stop.

She came out to them, and said that she had forgotten to remind the Mother to call upon the Major and Fräulein Milch to-day; the Major was very good-natured, but he was very sensitive in regard to the respect shown him, and he never forgave any one for neglecting to pay the proper attention to

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Fräulein Milch. Fräulein Milch was a very excellent, respectable person, if they could overlook one thing.

They returned to the villa in good spirits.

The first person they met in the courtyard was the Major. He looked somewhat out of humor, but his countenance lighted up when the Professorin said that she had intended to call upon him and Fräulein Milch to-day, and to get a cup of coffee, as she unfortunately could not fall into the ways of this part of the country, and drink wine every day.

The Major nodded; but he soon went off to send a child of the porter's to Fräulein Milch with the welcome message.

The Mother was very animated, and Eric expressed his joy that his mother experienced something of that exhilaration produced by a sight of the life of the people and the life of nature along the Rhine.

When Roland came to dinner, he said in a low tone to the Professorin: —

"I have looked into the Conversations-Lexicon, and to-day is Theodore Parker's birthday; to-day is the twenty-fourth of August."

The Mother whispered that it would be well for him to speak of it to no one but her.

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CHAPTER XIII.

SOUR CREAM SWEETENED.

THE Major had never been in better spirits at the table than to-day. He forgot to beckon to Joseph to fill up a second time his glass with the favorite Burgundy.

Frau Ceres smiled dubiously when the Professorin gave an account of the excellent people she had seen, the refreshing influence of the prospect of river and mountain, and the yet fairer one of such noble, genuine, domestic life. She added that she had but little acquaintance with other lands, but it was certain that no land surpassed Germany in real depth of feeling and generally diffused culture. Cities and villages, that were only empty names to the traveller whizzing by, concealed within them the beautiful and the best adornments of humanity.

"Nowhere, not in any place where church-bells have rung, has a better sermon been preached than that," said the Major to Eric. He then rose. "Now, the Mother — all of you drink with me — now, long life to the Mother; she enjoys life herself, and makes other people see life on its beautiful and fair side, and the Builder of all the worlds will bless her for it. My brothers! — I mean my — my — then, long life to the Professorin."

Never before had the Major made so long a speech at table, and never had he been so joyous as to-day. Soon after dinner he went towards home, repeating over to himself by the way the words of his speech, for he specially prided himself on being able to give it to Fräulein Milch word for word. All the reputation in the world is of no account if she does not praise him, for she has the best insight into everything.

When he reached the house, and Fräulein Milch complained to him that to-day her sweet cream had turned sour, and not a drop was to be got in the whole village, he signified to her by a wave of the hand that she was to keep silence, so that he should not forget his toast. Placing himself directly in front of her, he said: —

"This is the speech I made at dinner."

Laadi looked up at her master, when she heard him declaiming with such energy, and when the Major had concluded, she signified by a bark that she comprehended him. The Major did not mean to tell a lie, but the speech was assuredly better, at least it was longer, as he rehearsed it now to Fräulein Milch, than the one he had made. She said, when he got through: —

"I am only glad that there were some good people there to hear you."

Fräulein Milch did not take to Herr and Frau Sonnenkamp; but she especially disliked Fräulein Perini.

"Why haven't you spread our beautiful white table-cloth?" asked the Major, when he surveyed the neat table set in the garden.

"Because the white is too dazzling in the sunlight."

"That's true; it's well. Mustn't I shut Laadi up? she's so demonstrative."

"No; just let the dog be loose."

The Major was quite in despair that he could not do something to show honor to his guests.

After a while he came back in triumph, for he had done something which was a great sacrifice for him; he had begged the Grand-master's cook to give him a pitcher of fresh cream. He scarcely ever borrowed anything, but to-day an exception must be made.

He managed to place the pitcher upon the table unnoticed by Fräulein Milch, and put his hand up to his mouth to keep himself from laughing outright, when he thought of the Fräulein's astonishment at finding sweet cream upon the table.

He did still more. He went into the sitting-room and dragged his great, leather-covered easy-chair into the garden, for the Professorin to sit in; but when Fräulein Milch came out, she surprised him by pointing out that the easy-chair would not bear the bright sunlight out-of-doors. They carried it back together.

"Sha'n't we go to meet them?" said the Major, who had taken out his spy-glass; "just look through, — stop, I'll alter it, — there; I think there's somebody in sight down yonder."

Fräulein Milch begged him to be quiet, and the Major looked now as if he were ready to weep. Laying his hand on Fräulein Milch's shoulder, he said, —

"It's hard — very hard — cruel — bad — very bad — very cruel that I can't say, Here, Frau Dournay, here is my wife."

Fräulein Milch wheeled about swiftly, and there was a freezing coldness in her whole demeanor.

"For Heaven's sake, what's the matter?"

The dog barked as if she would say, "What's all this? What do you look so angry for?"

"I'm quiet now — I'm quiet now! Be easy, Laadi," said the Major soothingly. He was so exhausted, that he was obliged to sit down; he tried to light his long pipe, but it went out.

He stood by the garden-fence, drumming with his fingers upon one of the rails, and

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lost in so deep a reverie, that the guests stood before him, without his having noticed their approach.

The meeting of the Mother and Fräulein Milch was not so cordial as the Major had hoped it would be. Each seemed to hold back a little, and they evidently gave each other a close inspection. But the Major laughed inwardly when he thought of the sweet cream, which Fräulein Milch poured out just as usual, without noticing it.

He soon tapped with his stump-finger upon his forehead, saying to himself, —

"She's much too smart to make any fuss before strangers. O, she's wise; one can't know how wise she is!"

How he would have liked to say that to the Professorin! But he resolved to speak as little as possible to-day, and leave the field wholly to Fräulein Milch.

Just the right subject of conversation did not seem to come up; but when the Doctor's wife was mentioned, Fräulein Milch expressed her respect for the noble woman, who had just the right sort of aristocracy.

"And what do you mean by the right sort of aristocracy?"

"It seems to me to receive every one's respect and honor."

"Exactly so, and that perhaps is still truer of Frau Dournay," interposed the Major.

It seemed to him that Fräulein Milch sneered a trifle, and it was not pleasant to him.

The Mother asked Fräulein Milch if she were a native of this part of the country.

She answered curtly in the negative.

At last an expedient occurred to the Major. Two strange horses must be left in the stable by themselves; perhaps they will kick a little at first, but they are soon on good terms. He busied himself in giving a long account to Eric and Roland of the vineyard, which would this year yield wine for the first time, virgin wine as it was called; they must go with him to see it.

The ladies were now by themselves. The Mother wanted to say something commendatory of Fräulein Milch, about whom she had heard so many favorable things; but this did not exactly suit her, and by a happy turn she referred to the strangeness of the change in her own life, and how much she needed help.

This was the right key to touch, for Fräulein Milch was in her element whenever she could render any advice and assistance. She took an unexpectedly deep view, saying that a firm position in life could be kept, so long as one's self-respect was preserved. The Mother was surprised at the tact and knowledge of the world she displayed. She expected to see a narrow-minded, frivolous, talkative housewife, and here was evidence of refined thought which could be the result only of deep and mature reflection.

She wanted to say, You are more than your circumstances would indicate; but she refrained, and expressed anew her satisfaction at the beauty of the landscape, which was continually unfolding hidden charms, and at the rich fulness of life, as revealed in human beings, who even in solitude cherished refined thoughts and noble sentiments. Fräulein Milch, who had seated herself with her cup of coffee a little apart from the table, now drew up nearer, and beginning with an allusion to Eric's discreet management, she proceeded to give a clear-sighted characterization of Herr Sonnenkamp and his wife.

She did not mention Fräulein Perini. She only expressed her regret that Herr Sonnenkamp, who was not really hard-hearted, should have no systematic beneficence. She drew a picture of the necessitous condition of various people in the neighborhood, for she knew everybody for miles around. The Mother said finally: —

"I thank you; you remind me of a work which I had lost sight of, and which was the very reason of my coming here. If I have the disposal of Herr Sonnenkamp's charities, will you assist me?"

Fräulein Milch promised to do so; but she suggested that it would be very much more expedient for the Professorin to have the coöperation of the daughter of the house; in this way many good results could be secured. The girl, who was serious and earnest, would take again her proper place, and the immeasurable wealth of the father would have a secure and immovable basis if it were intrusted to the care of the daughter of the house.

The Mother's eyes gleamed as she looked at Fräulein Milch; yonder the Doctor's wife, and here the housekeeper, are appealing to her to bring Manna out of the convent, and initiate her into an active life of common usefulness.

She made, very cautiously, further inquiries of the charitable and sensible housekeeper concerning the people in the neighborhood, but Fräulein Milch evaded them. She affirmed that she did not have the right veiw of people; she saw them on Sundays and holidays, when they were in a merry mood, singing, and going up and down the mountain with wreaths on their heads; but whoever was not in the very midst of this hilarious movement, whoever observed it

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from the window, or from behind the garden hedge, could form no suitable estimate of it; generally the whole seems one undistinguishable jumble, just as when one stops his ears and looks at people dancing, but hears nothing of the music.

The Mother led the talk back to Manna, and, forgetting her usual marked reserve, Fräulein Milch declared that Manna must have received some severe shock, as it was not natural for any one to go from the extreme of overbearing pride to the extreme of humility.

"I will relate to you one little incident of Manna, and you will know what she is. A stinging fly, a Rhine-gnat, as it is called, alighted on her hand, and sucked her blood; she quietly let it suck, and then said: 'The ugly fly! I have let it drink my blood without disturbing it, and just for that it has stung me.' Now can't you know what the child is from this little trait, supposing that they have not spoiled her in the convent? I can speak of the child with so much the more freedom, as she has a dislike to me, of which Fräulein Perini was the cause."

Fräulein Milch now launched out into a passionate invective against Pranken.

She acknowledged that her aversion to him arose from his making the Major the target of his wit, more than was attributable to youthful arrogance; he was both witty and supercilious. And it was so much the more remarkable that now he should pretend to be pious, and that too, before he had married Manna; there must be some deep-laid game here, not easily seen through.

Engaged thus in friendly intercourse, the two women got to know each other. Frau Dournay, with her naturally ladylike and easy bearing, imparted a great deal, without seeming to do so; Fräulein Milch, with her acquired culture, which did not sit gracefully upon her, in every communication of deep thought showed plainly the difficult steps by which she had made it her own. When the Professorin spoke with such ease and fluency, Fräulein Milch nodded, saying to herself; "Yes, forsooth! this lady has sat down at the table all spread, and been served by others, with all the means of culture, while I have had to cook my own food and to set my own table."

The Major saw from a distance the two women take each other by the hand, and he spoke to Laadi fondling words that he would like to have spoken to Fräulein Milch.

"You are a pretty creature, smarter than all the world put together — clear as the day — quiet and steady — not you, Laadi, — what are you looking at me so for?"

He returned to the garden, Roland and Eric following immediately.

As the Major was escorting the Professorin a part of the way home, she said: —

"I believe that I am acquainted now not only with the two best, but also the two happiest people in this region."

The Major remained some time standing in the same place, and looking after the departing guests; then turning his eyes upward, he said: —

"Thanks to thee, thou Builder of all the worlds! Thou knowest what I would say, without my speaking, — oh dear!"

BOOK VIII. — CHAPTER I.

ON GOETHE'S BIRTH-DAY.

The swiftly-flowing Rhine between its bends seems transformed into a lake, until, curving around the jutting mountain, it continues its course.

This is very much the case with the story we are narrating.

The Mother wanted to go straightforward to the goal she had in view, but many obstacles interposed. First came a very pressing invitation from Clodwig, for the Mother and the whole of Sonnenkamp's family to celebrate Goethe's birth-day at Wolfsgarten.

The invitation was accepted; but Frau Ceres and Fräulein Perini remained at home.

They drove to Wolfsgarten. Eric did not say it in so many words, but his eyes expressed how much he felt protected and supported by the Mother's presence, in entering the house of his friend; she seemed a living testimony that he crossed the threshold with a pure heart and a pure eye. Yet he could not suppress all anxiety in regard to his first meeting with Bella. She came with the Aunt, as far as the wood, to meet them.

Bella embraced the Mother, and again thanked her for having subjected herself to the self-denial of letting Aunt Claudine remain with her. Extending her hand to Eric, she said, with a sort of chilled look: —

"You were his first thought to-day, my young friend."

She said nothing further, and did not mention her husband's name.

Rain began to fall before they reached Wolfsgarten, and it did not cease during the whole day, so that they were confined in doors.

Clodwig was remarkably cheerful and

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happy, and the day passed off with a joyousness that is possible only to persons in entire leisure, and perhaps only on the banks of the Rhine.

Roland was the happiest of all; he seemed to be the life and connecting link of the company, looking up at every one, as if he would ask: —

"Why are you not as glad as I am?"

He went from the Mother to the Aunt, from her to Bella and to Clodwig, to and fro, as if he must let every one know how pleasant and home-like a circle he had found. He was in such very good spirits, that at last he said: —

"Ah! when sister Manna comes home, she will see at once that uncle, aunt, grandfather and all are here, just as if they had grown upon trees."

The inquiry was made where Pranken was.

They said he had gone to stay with an agriculturist devoted to the church, the convent-farmer, as he was called; for there was nothing, at the present day, to which an ecclesiastical coloring and characteristic was not given. Pranken had the good fortune, by this means, to be near the convent, whose lands were farmed by the agriculturist.

They assembled in the grand saloon, from which three doors opened upon the covered piazza adorned with flowers and hanging-plants, and furnished with comfortable seats.

As they were quietly sitting and chatting together, Clodwig suddenly raised his hand as a signal for them to be silent; they understood his meaning and ceased talking. He had taken out his watch, and now said: —

"This is the very moment Goethe was born. I beg," he added with a kindly glance, "I beg Bella and Fräulein Dournay ——"

The ladies understood what he meant, and seating themselves at the piano, played Beethoven's Overture to Egmont, arranged as a duet.

Clodwig, leaning back in his chair, listened with closed eyes; the Professorin was sitting near him, while Eric, holding Roland by the hand, was upon the piazza.

At the conclusion of the Overture, Clodwig informed them that he had been so fortunate as to know Goethe personally, and related a variety of pleasing anecdotes.

The Mother expressed her regret at never having heard the voice of the exalted genius, nor looked him in the eye, although she was old enough, at the time he died, to know what he was, even if she could not fully comprehend him. She recounted the fact of a man's coming to her father's house, as they were sitting down to dinner, and informing them that news of Goethe's death had just been brought. An elderly lady was so affected by it, that she could not sit down with them to dinner.

In the qualified view he then expressed, she had gained an acquaintance for the first time with her husband's mind; for while he held Goethe in the highest veneration, he had asserted that the Master had made poetic art too effeminate, in placing woman too directly as the central point of living interests, and giving the impression to men, that poesy and an acquaintance with it were the province of woman, just as so many Free-thinkers, as they were styled, regarded religion as belonging peculiarly to her.

Clodwig opposed this view of Goethe; he dwelt with special emphasis upon the difficulty experienced in our modern life, which does not admit of the worship of genius, as it is termed; for this worship could be possible only where a pure manifestation of God, a theophany, was granted. When limitations were placed to this, worship was no longer possible.

It was scarcely noticed that Bella, Claudine and Herr Sonnenkamp had left the saloon, for Bella had requested Herr Sonnenkamp that he would give her some advice about the new arrangements of her conservatory.

And thus Clodwig and the Mother were now left alone in the saloon, while Eric and Roland were sitting in silence upon the piazza, and listening to Clodwig as he added, that the future would no longer, perhaps, have any formal cultus, when there was the true consecration of the spirit in actual life.

Eric and Roland listened with bated breath, as Clodwig and the Mother acknowledged to each other the influence which the Master had exerted upon the development of their life and the training of their minds. They thoroughly discussed that work too little known, "Goethe's Conversations with Eckermann," which brings us into the living, personal presence of the Master of masters. Clodwig represented that the youth of to-day no longer had the same veneration for Goethe; and the Professorin informed him that her deceased husband—she quoted him repeatedly—had explained this by saying, that the youth of to-day regarded themselves, first of all, as citizens, and this life as a citizen, this active influence in the State, had not dawned upon Goethe, and it was not his sphere.

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They again extolled, as in an alternate chant, the influence of Goethe in enriching and in deepening their life.

Eric and Roland listened in silence; once only, Eric said in a low tone, —

"Note, Roland, this is glory, this is renown, this is the noblest good-fortune, for a man to exert such an influence that his spirit always gives fresh inspiration; that two persons shall sit in after years, and derive mutual edification from recalling what one who is dead and gone has been the means of establishing."

Roland looked into the large, gleaming eyes of Eric, who could have embraced the youth as he said, —

"For once, I am present at your devotions."

Again the two in the saloon spoke, and now Eric heard his name mentioned, as the Mother said, —

"Eric reads Goethe's poems aloud very well."

He got up at once, and was ready to do it.

Bella, Aunt Claudine, and Herr Sonnenkamp were called in, and Eric read aloud, but to-day not so well as usual, for there were many things which might be taken as the embodiment of emotions in his own heart and in that of Bella.

They sat down to dinner in an elevated frame of mind, as after a religious service.

Clodwig could not speak often enough of the good-fortune, which had led the son of one of the guests to become the life-guide of the son of another.

He plunged deeply into the consideration that one Spirit, who presided over all, had prepared and fitted the one to impart the highest he possessed to the other.

He said very naturally, that Manna ought to leave the convent, as no one could aid her to complete her education more worthily than the Mother.

Sonnenkamp and the Mother looked at each other in amazement, for another was expressing their own silent convictions.

Sonnenkamp thanked Clodwig very meekly for the deep interest he felt in his family, and said that a suggestion of Clodwig's had to him the weight of a higher command, and he hoped that the Professorin would receive it as such. She promised to undertake the charge, as her only satisfaction was in being useful.

The rain still continued. Again they assembled in the grand saloon, and now Bella displayed her proficiency in arts that no one knew her to be mistress of. She appeared, having a red velvet curtain draped about her in the Grecian style, and imitated a famous Italian player with wonderful fidelity to the life. She went out, and appeared again as a Parisian grisette; then she afterwards appeared as a Tyrolese singer, every time wholly different, and hardly recognizable.

She excited the most merriment when she imitated in succession three different beggar-women, — a Catholic, a Protestant, and a Jew. She enacted also, with the same applause, a scene in which a Catholic, a Protestant, and a Jewish woman came separately to the dentist, to have an aching tooth extracted. And without degenerating into caricature, she took off her acquaintances, all with such perfect grace and such accuracy of delineation, that words failed to express the admiration.

Clodwig said in a low tone to the Mother: "You may well be proud that she makes this exhibition before you, for she cannot be easily induced to do it in any one's presence whom she does not value highly."

Sonnenkamp added that it was a magnificent but wasteful luxury to possess such talent, and not to exhibit it to the delight of the whole world.

Eric, meanwhile, watched with a mixed feeling these dramatic representations, which he could not help admiring. How rich a nature Bella possessed! And how hard it must be for her to circumscribe her manifold activity within the narrow bounds of a limited sphere of duty! But Bella, to-day, had thrown herself into the various parts with all her energy; she desired to have every feeling and every remembrance effaced from her own and from Eric's soul. Eric had this impression, but he made no remark. Bella spoke to him once only, telling him that the Russian Prince, who was staying with Weidmann, wrote frequently to her, and desired to be remembered to him; and that he also wrote in the warmest terms of esteem concerning Roland's earlier tutor, Master Knopf.

In the emphasis which she placed upon the word tutor, Bella seemed desirous of setting up again between her and Eric the old boundary line that had disappeared.

Towards evening the rain held up, and the sun came out with that inexpressible glory of coloring only to be seen when the mountains glow, and seem transfigured with its misty beams. They immediately set out towards home.

The whole day seemed a perfect series of fantastic forms. Roland was continually giving expression to his astonishment at the versatility of the Countess; but Sonnenkamp offered his hand to the Mother, saying, —

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"If agreeable to you, we will to-morrow pay a visit to my daughter."

The Mother nodded assent. Sonnenkamp was highly pleased; he had perfect confidence in the nobleness of her motives, and, for awhile, he himself experienced a like elevation. It is such a fine thing, and people are so happy in taking up with things of that sort, and it always pays well, at any rate, in making one feel comfortably.

But very soon the consciousness of his own triumphant power came uppermost; the world subserves his plans, and it is his chief delight to make people his tools and playthings, and balance himself on their shoulders. And it exactly suited his purpose that Clodwig and the Professorin adopted his own secret plan; they must now feel grateful to him for carrying out their desires, at the very time they were of service to him, and were helping him to bring to a successful issue his main design. He saw in this a confirmation of his claim to be a being of a higher species, one who disposes as he will of others, and at the same time makes them feel under obligation to him.

On the evening of his return, Sonnenkamp ordered the gardener to place the next day Manna's favorite flower, the mignonette, in every part of her room.

CHAPTER II.

AN ISLAND PLOUGHED UP.

HUMILITY, respect, and helpful kindness were manifest in Sonnenkamp's whole demeanor, as he extended his hand to the Professorin on her getting out of the carriage; as he conducted her to the steamboat; as he looked out for a seat protected from the draught and giving an uninterrupted prospect; as he supplied all her wants and asked if there was any thing he could do for her.

The Professorin was startled when she perceived that she had forgotten a book which she had laid upon the table, intending to take it with her, but had left it there. She evaded Sonnenkamp's question what was the name of the book, for she could well imagine, that the writings of the man she held in such high veneration would not be agreeable to Sonnenkamp. She said in a joking way that she had lived so long in the society of the learned world, that even making a trip on the Rhine, in a clear, bright sunshine, she thought she must have a book with her. She must give herself up wholly to the scenery and to her own thoughts.

Sonnenkamp seated himself near her, and said in a tone of genuine emotion, that he could not but congratulate his children, nay, almost envy them, that they were to live in the society of a woman of such a youthful spirit.

The more he talked, the tenderer he became, and his eyes glistened as if moistened with tears. He frequently said that he could not speak of his youthful years, which were arid and desolate, with no gentle hand of woman to soothe him with caresses. The strong man was deeply moved, as he spoke of his childhood in words that partly veiled and partly revealed his meaning. At last he came to the main point, composing himself by a violent effort. The Professorin felt that she must first inquire into the reason why Manna had became so alienated from him. Bending down his head, he proceeded to say: —

"They may have told her something that I disdained to contradict. Were you, honored lady, to know what it was, you would without hesitation pronounce it to be a falsehood devised by the most malignant hostility."

The Professorin desired to know what was said, but he replied that if he should repeat it, he should run mad here on board the boat. His features, that had been composed and placid, were suddenly distorted in a fearful manner.

The Professorin now dwelt upon the visit that she was going to make to the Superior, the friend of her youth, and begged Herr Sonnenkamp to avoid all direct endeavor to influence his daughter in favor of herself.

"Children," she said, "must make their own friends, and they cannot receive them ready made from others. One must be careful not to intrude one's self upon them, and to wait quietly and patiently, until they come of their own accord."

Sonnenkamp considered this so judicious, that he promised not to go with her, in the first instance, to the island, but to remain at the inn on this side of the river until the Professorin should send for him.

"You are as good as you are wise," he said praisingly, for he detected as he thought in the lady's unobtrusiveness a politic motive; and he was pleased in the notion of circumventing all cunning with a deeper cunning still.

While Sonnenkamp and the Mother were sailing down the Rhine, a strange circumstance occurred on the convent-island. From one end of the year to the other, no horse was to be seen upon the island, except when the ground was ploughed. The pupils in amazement pointed out to each other a plough, which a horse was draw-

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ing up and down the extreme point of the island. A noble-looking farmer in a blue blouse, and with a gray hat drawn down over his eyes, was guiding the plough. The children stood at a distance watching the plough, as if it were some novel wonder, and looked at Manna for permission to go nearer in order to observe it. She nodded permission, and they walked along the gravelled walk by the side of the field. Then the ploughman, taking off his hat, made a salutation; Manna remained standing with a fixed look as if she were under a spell. Is that not Herr von Pranken? He continued his ploughing and said nothing. As he turned the plough, to come back, he looked towards her and smiled; it was he.

"He's a splendid-looking ploughman," said one of the girls.

"And he seems so genteel," exclaimed another.

"And he has a seal ring on his finger," cried a third. "Who knows that this is not a knight in disguise!"

Manna called to the children to return with her. She went into her cell, from which the field could be overlooked, but she kept away from the window. She felt flattered that Pranken should subject himself to the most humble condition, in order to be near her, and she felt grateful to him for being so modest and considerate as not to speak to her. She debated with herself whether she should not mention it to the Superior, but she came to the conclusion that she had no right to betray Herr von Pranken's secret; besides, so far from there being any harm in it, it was the noblest tribute of respect.

Going to the window, she saw that he kept steadily at his work, and he had never seemed to her so pure and noble, so lovable as now, engaged in this rustic labor.

On the window-sill was a rose-bush with a late rose in full bloom. Looking up she caught sight of it, and took hold of the stem, thinking she would pluck and throw it to him as a sign of recognition; but just then, a lay-sister came in and informed her that a visitor had come who asked to see Manna. The rose remained on its stem.

Manna turned round and seemed perplexed. Pranken is still there ploughing. Could he be the one who was announced? or has the Countess Bella arrived? With wavering step she descended to the reception-room. The Superior introduced to her a good-looking, portly lady, saying: —

"This is my friend, Professorin Dournay, the mother of your brother's teacher."

CHAPTER III.

"OUT OF THE WORLD, AND OUT OF THE WORLD."

The first feeling was surprise, the second, quiet confidence, as the eyes of the Professorin and Manna met; each found the other different from the preconceived image.

Manna remembered Eric's tall figure, and his resemblance to the picture of St. Anthony, and before her stood a short, fair, gray-haired woman. Frau Dournay had pictured to herself Roland's handsome sister as like him, and now she saw a slender, delicate creature, who, at first sight, gave no impression of beauty. A mole on her left cheek, and one on the right side of her upper lip, were quite conspicuous; her complexion was rather dark, and her wonderful brown eyes glowed with deep and quiet warmth upon every one who looked into them.

Manna bowed ceremoniously to the Professorin, who rose and held out her hand with maternal kindness, saying that she was very glad to become acquainted with the daughter of her host, while paying a visit to her friend, the Superior; and she added, with special emphasis, that she had been so fortunate as to become quite intimate with Manna's mother.

"Is my mother well?" asked Manna, with a sweet tone of warmth in her low and quiet voice. The Professorin told her of her mother's health, and added that the doctor said he had never known her so constantly cheerful as now.

"Now, I have a request to make," she continued in an animated tone; "since I have had the good fortune to be your parents' guest, I have insisted that the daily course of your brother's studies should not be in the least interfered with, and now let me beg you, my dear young lady, to go on with your usual occupations. I shall have the pleasure of dining with you, and after dinner, I shall be very glad if you will spare me a quarter of an hour."

"If you have any private message for Manna," said the Superior, "I will leave you together."

"I have not any private message."

Manna gave the Professorin her hand, and left the room. She did not know what to make of it all; why had she been summoned when there was so little to be said to her? It offended her a little to be so pushed about by a stranger — for the lady was a stranger. But as she walked through the long passage, she still saw before her the sincere and gentle countenance of the

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stranger, smiling at her as if saying, You are a strange child!

Manna returned thoughtfully to her cell; she looked out of the window and saw Pranken just entering a boat with his horse, and he was soon on the opposite shore.

"Ah, Herr von Pranken!" cried a loud voice, and the echo repeated the sound.

What voice was that?

Pranken hurried up the bank and vanished behind the willows.

Manna longed for the time when the world would be shut out from her, and no more unrest could come over her, for now she was deeply disturbed. There was Pranken; here, the tutor's mother — what did it all mean? She took her book of devotions, but could not succeed in drawing her thoughts from the subjects which occupied them.

In the mean time, the Professorin was listening to the Superior's account of Manna's strange nature, which seemed really to hold two natures within it, one, humble and submissive, almost without a will of its own; the other, struggling, defiant, and self-willed. She had a true, earnest character, too serious, perhaps, for a girl of seventeen; she was often unable to hold her feelings under control, but who could always do that at her age? A weight lay on her spirits which was uncontrollable; it plainly had its source in the child's keen sense of the discord between her parents and its influence upon herself. The Superior asked Frau Dournay to tell her more of the characteristic peculiarities of the parents, but she evaded the subject.

The appearance, as well as the bearing, of the two ladies offered a sharp contrast. The Professorin's figure was full, and in her face there was a constant expression of wide-awake animation; her hands were round and plump; the Superior was tall and thin, her expression severe and earnest, as if just a moment before she had given some positive order, or was on the point of giving one; her hands were long and perfectly shaped. Both women had experienced hard trials: the Professorin had won a gentle, smiling content; the Superior, a complete preparation to meet all events with firm and stoical endurance.

The first greeting between these early friends, after nearly thirty years of separation, had been a strange one, the Superior not hearing, or seeming not to hear, that Frau Dournay addressed her just as she had in the old days.

"I did not think I should ever see you again in this world," she had said directly, and when the Professorin tried to recall reminiscences of their youth, she had replied that she knew the past no longer; she had destroyed all its mementoes, and recognized only a future, the sole object that ought to occupy our thoughts.

The Superior noticed that this distant manner of speaking startled her old friend, and she said, with the same composure, that she made no distinction among the relations and acquaintances of her early life; no one was nearer to her or farther from her, and that any one who could not attain this state ought not to devote herself to a spiritual life.

The Professorin felt as if she had been turned off and shown out of the house, but she was calm enough to say: —

"Yes, you always had a strength of mind which used to frighten me, but now I admire it."

The Superior smiled; then, as if angry at having been betrayed into any self-satisfaction by this civil speech, she said, —

"Dear Clara, I beg you not to tempt me into vanity. I stand at my post, and have a strict watch to keep, until the Lord of Hosts shall call me to himself. Formerly, I must confess, I did not realize that you and I lived in different worlds; in mine, it is one's duty not to rely on one's own strength."

With all this self-denial, it seemed to the Professorin that the Superior spoke of the power and the greatness of the sphere in which she moved, with that pride, or at least with that lofty self-confidence, shown by all who belong to a great and powerful community. To the Superior, on the other hand, she seemed like an isolated, detached atom, floating it knew not whither.

They soon found, however, a point on which they could sympathize, in speaking of the difficult task of educating the young.

The Superior was rich in experience, while the Professorin depended almost entirely on the precepts and opinions of her departed husband; and now that she took the attitude of a scholar, and listened gratefully, gentler thoughts rose within the Superior, who had felt that she had been somewhat harsh towards the excellent woman; and in this mood, she imparted some things that she really meant to hold back. She told Frau Dournay that, at first, Manna's position in the convent had been a very hard one, for a strange thing had happened. Her entrance into the convent seemed to bring about a revolution. Two Americans from the best families were then there, and they were not willing to sit at the same table with the Creole, for such Manna seemed; they told their fellow-pu-

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pils that, in their native country, such half-bloods always travelled in separate cars on the railroads, and, even in church, had places set apart for them. And as most of the children were from noble German families, they united in a protest against Manna's presence, without her knowing anything of it herself. While she slept, three of the pupils had examined her nails, in the presence of a nun, and as no black spots were found on them, it was proved that both parents were of pure blood. Manna was tolerated, and soon succeeded in winning the blue ribbon by her quick mind and great industry.

The Professorin held back the words which rose to her lips, for she was resolved to keep quiet and arouse no discussion; but her lips trembled as she longed to tell the Superior that it was her duty to have shown the children, by precept and example, that there can be no distinction of blood before God, and that such exclusiveness was impious and barbarous.

Frau Dournay had to exercise still more self-control when the Superior asked her to be kind enough to fold her hands when grace was said at dinner. The color flushed into her face, as she listened, and answered, —

"My husband is gone to his eternal home, and I know that when he stands before the judgment-seat the Holy Spirit will say to him: Thou hast lived according to the purest convictions of thy soul; thou hast honestly examined thyself, and hast attempted and done only what thou couldst do in all sincerity. At our table, we had no formal prayer, but before we sat down to eat and drink, each of us spent a minute in silent self-communion, and in the thought of what it really is to renew our existence from the Fountain of life; and our meal was consecrated by pure and good thoughts."

"Well, well, I did not mean to wound you," said the Superior. "I heard with sympathy that you had lost your husband, for whose sake you sacrificed yourself so nobly and gladly."

"I was happy with my husband," replied the Professorin; "our love grew stronger every day. But love for a lover or a husband is always dwelt on; there is another kind of love, which, though very different, is wonderfully fresh and noble, and I think I know it. Forgive me for saying it, but I mean that it seems as if love only rightly begins when one has a high-minded, excellent son."

"I am glad that you are so happy; but tell me sincerely whether you have not found that of ten married women, nine, at least, are unhappy."

The Professorin was silent, and the Superior continued, —

"Your silence is assent, and now look at the great difference; among a hundred nuns you find scarcely one unhappy one."

Frau Dournay was still silent; she did not wish to debate this assertion: she was a guest, and would not try to convert or correct; but the Superior seemed to try to draw her out as she asked, —

"Do you know a more unhappy position than that of a girl who knows herself, and whom others know, to be the heiress of millions? Is she to believe in the love of frail human creatures? Is she to believe that she is wooed for her own sake? There is nothing for her, but to give herself and her wealth into the hands of the Eternal. This I say to you — I know not what commission you have, and even if you have none, you can report it. We do not try to gain Manna and her future wealth, we insist that she shall go back into the world, and return to us only on her own free decision. There is neither compulsion nor intimidation on our part, but it is our duty to protect those who prefer the imperishable to the perishable, wherever they may be. Now you know all, and we will say no more on the subject."

The Superior left her, and Frau Dournay walked out alone upon the island. It seemed to her that it would be a bold act, one of unjustifiable rashness indeed, to take this child by force, even the force of affection, from this sphere where she lived at peace and wished to end her life. She stood on the shore, and almost without knowing why, allowed herself to be taken across to the main-land, where she was not a little astonished to find Herr Sonnenkamp and Herr von Pranken, taking wine together, under the shady lindens of the inn.

Pranken was dressed so strangely that she thought she was mistaken, and she was about to turn back; but she heard her name called, and approached the two men in the garden.

Sonnenkamp was in high spirits, declaring himself very fortunate to have met his friend Pranken here; he considered it a fine thing that the Baron had changed himself into a husbandman, hinting that he himself had once been something of the kind; then he said, —

"We have no secrets from our friend; will Manna go home with us, Frau Professorin?"

The Professorin replied that not a word

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had been said on the subject, and that it seemed hardly to be wished; it would be well to let Manna complete her time at the convent, and certainly to refrain from all compulsion.

Pranken agreed very emphatically, but Sonnenkamp was much put out; it seemed to him dreadful that his daughter should be living here in the midst of a crowd of other girls, when a free and happy life was waiting for her.

The noon-day bell rang from the Convent, and Frau Dournay said she must go back. Sonnenkamp accompanied her to the shore, and there said in a low voice: —

"Do not trouble yourself about Pranken. We will leave my daughter free in every respect."

The Professorin returned to the island; the children were already at table when she entered the dining-room; she stood with folded hands behind her chair for a few moments before seating herself. When dinner was over, and thanks had been returned, the Superior said to Manna, —

"Now go with the friend of your family."

Frau Dournay and Manna walked towards the shady grove on the upper end of the island; and Heimchen, who was quite confiding towards the Professorin, went with them; but she was quite willing to sit down with a book, under a tree, and wait till they came back for her.

"But you must not take Manna away with you," cried the child from her low seat; they both started, for the child had given utterance, from an instinctive feeling, to the fear of one and the hope of the other.

CHAPTER IV.

THE IRON MUST ENTER THINE OWN SOUL.

For a long time neither uttered a word; at last the Professorin said, —

"You seem to be called to a higher life, from having been obliged in early youth to suffer so hard an experience, and to feel deeply the discord among men."

"I? How?" asked Manna. "What do you know?" She trembled.

"I know," answered the Professorin, "that you have suffered under that cruel burden which weighs upon your great and noble father-land."

"My father-land? I? Speak more plainly."

"It pains me that I tear open a wound which is scarred over, but this scar is a mark of honor for you, and it is not your fault, my child, that you are set in the midst of this life-struggle."

"I?"

"Yes."

"How? Tell me all; what do you know?"

"I mean that it should elevate you to have been obliged to bear humiliation and bitterness in your own person; it gives you a loftier consecration."

"Tell me plainly what you mean."

With an altered tone, like the hiss of a serpent, Manna spoke sharply and angrily; her gentle eyes sparkled restlessly.

"Heaven knows," said the Professorin, "I would not wound you; no, protecting and blessing you, would I lay my hand upon you."

She tried to place her hand on Manna's head, but the girl shrank back and cried: —

"Tell me distinctly, who knows it? What do you know? Pray speak."

"I know nothing, except that you had to suffer severely on your entrance into the convent; that two American girls took you for a half-blood, and would not associate with you."

"Yes, yes, that's it! Now I know why they examined my nails, and Anna Sotway stood by. Oh, it's well! it's well! I thank thee, holy God, that thou hast suffered me to experience this. In myself, in my own person, I was to feel the suffering that a slave feels in being examined! Why did they not open my veins? I thank thee, O God! But why dost thou suffer them to worship thee, and then to scorn thee in thy creatures? Then it was not because I tried to be reverent and obedient, no, but because I was of pure blood, that I was tolerated here! Pah!"

It was a different being who spoke these words, and cried aloud in the wood: —

"Ye trees, why does each of you grow after its kind, and blossom and grow green and flourish, warmed by the same sun, and with the birds singing in your branches? Alas! alas! where am I?"

"In the right path," answered the Professorin. Manna gazed at her as if she were a spirit, and she continued: —

"A pure spirit is speaking again through you, my child; you have spoken truth. When Lessing said, 'I would not have all trees covered with the same bark,' he had no presentiment that his spirit would manifest itself anew here in the cloister, in a child just waking to life. His pure and holy spirit is between us now, my child, and I think Lessing would say: Forgive them; they will learn that God alone is constant, while the races of men are only the ever-varying, ever-returning figures of a dream."

Manna appeared hardly to have heard her, for now she grasped her arm asking: —

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"Did you not tell me, that you were specially in the confidence of my mother?"

"Yes."

"And has she told you the secret too?"

"I do not understand you."

"Speak openly with me. I know all."

"Your mother has told me no secret."

Manna seized the cross on her breast convulsively, and gazed silently before her for a long time.

With heart-felt earnestness, the Professorin expressed her deep regret at having moved her so greatly, and her desire not to force herself upon her, but to be her true friend.

Manna made no answer. At last she turned and kissed the lips of her startled companion.

"I kiss the lips which have spoken the dreadful words, and all the rest. Yes, I must experience it, I, myself. I believe that I am now first consecrated as the sacrifice."

The Mother stood helpless before this enigmatical being, and Manna at last promised to be quite calm. She seated herself on a bench which stood under a fir-tree, leaned back against the tree, and gazed up at the sky.

"Why," she said to herself, "does there now come no voice to us from the air? Ah, I would so gladly follow it forth over mountain and valley, to darkness and death."

Manna wept; the Professorin reminded her of her promise to be quite calm, but the girl declared she could not, it grieved her so to be torn from this place, which she must leave, since she could not be true in it. She would be living falsely, because people had not been true to her.

Now, for the first time, the Professorin understood that Manna had known nothing of what had passed, and she shuddered at what she had done. She mourned over having so disturbed Manna's young soul, saying that she could never forgive herself. And now Manna turned, and tried to calm and console her unhappy companion.

"Believe me, pray believe me," she cried, holding up her clasped hands, "only the truth can make us free, and that is the dreadful thing, that the park, and the house, and all the splendor are lies — No, that I did not mean — but one thing I beg, do not repent, when you have left me, that you told me what you did; it does not hurt me, it helps me. Ah, I beg — it helps me. I had to know it, and it is well."

The Professorin composed herself, and as she praised Manna's truthful impulses, the girl shook her head, saying: —

"I will not be praised, I do not deserve it; I do not deserve the whole truth, for I am hiding something myself."

The Professorin felt what a heavy weight she had brought upon the child, and she explained to her how the Superior had cured her troubles, like a physician who does not tell his patient all. Manna gazed wonderingly at her, as she said: —

"I am sorry that I too have not been quite sincere with you."

"You too?"

"Yes, I have not told you that your father came here with me; that he is waiting for my return on the other shore, and hoping that you will go home with us."

Manna rose and sat down again hastily. "The father hides from his child and sends strangers!" she murmured to herself. "Come with me to the Superior," she suddenly exclaimed.

She seized the Professorin's hand, and drew her towards the convent. Heimchen came towards them, crying: —

"No, Manna, you must not go away and leave me here alone."

"Come with us," answered Manna, taking the child by the hand.

She went to the Superior and asked permission to go with Frau Dournay to her father, who was waiting for her on the main-land.

"Send for him to come here."

"No, I would rather go to him."

Permission was granted. It was difficult for Manna to free herself from Heimchen, who could be pacified only by Manna's solemn promise to return.

Manna sat gazing into the water while they were in the boat. With Frau Dournay, she entered the garden of the inn, where they found Sonnenkamp and Pranken sitting in the shade of the arbor.

"You are going home with us?" cried Sonnenkamp to his daughter.

She received his embrace, but did not return it. Pranken greeted Manna joyfully, and as she extended her hand to him, said smiling: —

"I have hardened my hand, but my heart is still soft, perhaps too soft."

Manna cast down her eyes. There was some merry jesting about the manner in which Pranken had settled himself here in the neighborhood. He described pleasantly how his new life struck him; there was a fresh vigor in his bearing, and a tone of warm feeling in all his words. He saw with satisfaction what impression his deportment made upon Manna, who said, at last, that she believed she might speak openly before this gentleman and lady, who were not

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really strangers though not members of her own family. She was not yet quite resolved, but she felt a real longing to leave the convent very soon, or still better, not to return to it again, letting her father or the Professorin go over to say good-bye for her.

"May a friend say a word about it?" asked Pranken, as Sonnenkamp loudly expressed his joy.

Manna begged him to speak, and he explained that, as a friend, he would urge Manna to act properly and worthily; whatever might have passed, it was Manna's duty not to break too abruptly the close and holy ties which had united her with the convent, and, above all, with the Superior; hardness and ingratitude towards others left a weight and bitterness in the soul. He must believe, that, as Manna had entered the convent from her own wish and a pure resolve, she would leave it in all kindness and friendly feeling. It seemed to him the right course that Manna should return for a short time, to take leave of her companions and the holy sisterhood quietly and considerately. He repeated, that though he desired nothing more earnestly than to have Manna return to the outer world as soon as possible, and as fully as possible, still he considered it the duty of a friend to save from remorse and inward disquiet one to whom he stood in any near relation. There was more than excellence, there was a real nobility, in Pranken's manner as he said all this, and various were the looks and thoughts of the three who were watching him.

Sonnenkamp was angry, and yet he said to himself: "After all, aristocratic blood knows what's the proper thing."

The Professorin believed that Pranken meant to win Manna anew by these noble sentiments; Manna herself was quite subdued.

"You are right," she exclaimed, as she extended her hand and held Pranken's firmly. "You show me what is right. I thank you, and will follow your advice."

Sonnenkamp was beside himself as he saw his dearest wish again disappointed; but still greater was his astonishment, when the Professorin expressed her acquiescence.

After Manna had begged Pranken to avoid any meeting with her until she returned home, they all walked down to the shore, and the two ladies returned to the island.

Heimchen, who had wept constantly, had already been put to bed, and was still mourning that Manna had gone. Manna went to her and found her crying, and her pillow wet with tears; she dried her eyes and talked to her till she went to sleep; and while pacifying her, and promising all sorts of good things, she became calmer herself.

CHAPTER V.

NIGHT AND MORNING AT THE CONVENT.

Until it was quite late, Manna walked up and down the broad pathway on the island, holding the Superior and the Professorin by the hand. It seemed to her, that two loving potencies, each of which had its own valid claim, were contending to get possession of her.

It would be difficult to say how they came upon the topic, but the two ladies were discussing the subject of dogmatic belief. The Professorin maintained that salvability consisted in a willingness to perceive and acknowledge a wrong impulse, an error, or a transgression. The Superior agreed with this, but showed that one was always liable to return to a false view in the highest things, if a fixed and unalterable revealed doctrine, continually published anew through some infallible medium, did not provide a remedy against error; otherwise, one never knew whether he had not fallen into it afresh, and can never be freed from the pain of choosing.

The Superior had always a positive belief to fall back upon, while the Professorin was obliged to find some new basis and reason for every question that came up, which made her appear unsettled and doubtful. And this apparent indecision was increased by the feeling she had of not being justified in contending against a faith so firm and so beneficent in its influence. An unrest, like that of a spy, who, from the highest patriotic motives, inspects an enemy's camp, characterized her whole manner, and she blamed herself for having undertaken the commission. But she was now at the post, and must defend her views. Wishing to find some impregnable position, she represented to Manna that her father wanted to organize a general plan of systematic charity, and that it would be a noble vocation for her to take part in it. The Superior waited for Manna to reply, and she now said: —

"My father's donations do not fall into the right hands; we can do nothing but restore the property to him who alone has the right to determine what use shall be made of it."

There was more in Manna's reply than appeared on the surface.

The Professorin remarked that every poor man was a messenger of mercy, and

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every one who needed help made a demand for sacrifices; that it was not enough to bestow gifts, but one must personally devote himself to the distressed. The alms was not the important thing, but the pains which one must take on the supplicant's account. How often a man, as he goes along the street in winter, well wrapped up in his furs, bestows an alms upon a poor, freezing beggar! For him to unbutton his coat, and to look for something to give, is of more account than the gift itself, at least to the giver.

Manna answered that women could not do such a work by themselves. The Superior joined in, saying that she had advised decidedly against Manna's taking the veil, for it was to be feared that she had no true vocation for it. Then she added in a sharp tone to the Professorin: — "We are wholly indifferent to the accusation of having tried to get possession of the child's property; we do not despise the wealth, we can do a great deal of good with it; but it is the child's soul that we value, and we do not stop to inquire whether worldlings believe it or not."

The Professorin was glad to find herself at last in the cell where she was to sleep. She had never slept at a convent, and she had again the disagreeable feeling of being a traitress and a spy. She said to herself with a smile: —

"I am rejoiced now that I forgot Parker's book; it would be a fresh treachery to have and to read his words and his thoughts here in this house."

She gave up the purpose of exerting an influence over Manna, for here were prior experiences which were beyond her control, and relations that were involved in obscurity. A deep sorrow preyed upon the child, which could only be revealed at the confessional, and which perhaps there only could find relief.

The Professorin was deeply disturbed, and had troubled dreams. She seemed to be in the midst of Wallenstein's camp, and in fetters as a spy; she was being interrogated by the sergeant of the guard, when, all of a sudden, he was changed into Professor Einsiedel, who said to her: —

"Be not afraid, I have influence on every one here, I will set you at liberty."

Then she was standing in the midst of the court-circle, and all were laughing at the *vivandière* — years ago when she was a young, frolicsome girl, she had once taken that part — and now, as she met the glance of her son, she felt ashamed of her appearance.

These dreams whirled through her brain in strange confusion. She was rejoiced, on waking, to find that it was all a dream.

The hour for rising at the convent was a very early one, but long before the matin bell of the church rang, the Professorin had dressed, and stood watching from her cell the breaking day. The impressions of her troubled dreams faded like the mists on the river, which were now struggling with the dawning light. She dwelt in imagination upon the hundreds of young souls who now lay asleep, preparing to meet a peaceful future. She thought upon the nuns who had renounced life, to whom the day brought no event of personal interest, nothing but the uniform round of duty.

She shuddered as she thought of venturing to disturb such a life.

There may be many incidental and casual irregularities here, she thought, but a holy will has authority over these spirits; and at this early morning hour, a saying of her husband's recurred to her: —

"You can oppose an established positive religion only by having more religion than is embodied in it. The idea of the pure is persecuted, hunted down, obscured, in the world; and the hand must be sure of its high consecration, which ventures to attack a sanctuary of that idea."

The morning sun had become lord over the mist, shining brightly over river and mountains. The convent bell rang, and the great house was all astir.

The Professorin went down, and knelt behind a pillar; the sisters and the children assembled together.

She remained until the morning service had ended, and then going into the dining-hall, she begged Manna and the Superior to permit her to take leave. They accompanied her to the shore.

The Professorin exhorted Manna to stay at the convent, and devote herself to reflection and pure thought. She spoke with such earnestness that the Superior, taking her by the hand, uttered in a low tone what was evidently a prayer.

The Professorin perceived that her old friend was praying in her behalf. And why should there not be just as good grounds for this form, as for an inward thought and wish for another, on whom one would invoke every blessing, unexpressed in words? With a light heart, she was set over to the main-land.

Sonnenkamp was surprised that she did not have Manna with her; but she said, in explanation, that she would not interfere any farther in this matter. She went back with Sonnenkamp to the villa. On board

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the boat, she sketched out in full the plan of an organized system of charity, which must be so arranged that Manna could go from one sanctuary into another.

Sonnenkamp listened in silence, but in no pleasant humor. The whole world seemed to have entered into a conspiracy against him, to make of him a sanctified hypocrite.

Yesterday, Pranken had made the same demand upon him, and he had said in reply, that it was a contemptible thing for the very nobility to be desirous of playing the hypocrite; but Pranken had insisted principally upon the religious obligation.

Sonnenkamp had shrugged his shoulders, for the man kept his mask on even when he was alone with him. He only consented after Pranken had added, that, by this means, the Court would not only be justified in conferring the title of nobility, but would feel bound to do it. Here now was Frau Dournay making a similar demand; and this was so far good, that her intentions were most likely honest.

The journey home was not very animated, for they were returning from a bootless errand. Sonnenkamp was disturbed because he was called upon to do this and that, and no object had yet been accomplished.

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CHAPTER VI.

THE FORBIDDEN FRUIT IN EDEN.

A STRANGE spirit, meanwhile, made its appearance at Villa Eden. It was kept in concealment, and yet had nothing spectral; it was bright and luminous, and yet produced a great hurly-burly.

The morning after the departure of Eric's mother, Roland had gone to the vine-covered cottage, to get a book out of the library for Eric. With the simple desire of seeing how it looked now the Mother was away, he had entered the open door of her room. An open book was lying upon the table, and on the fly-leaf there was written in English: To my friend Dournay — Theodore Parker.

Roland was startled. This is the man, then, whom the Mother had spoken of as a saint a few days ago, and whom he was to get acquainted with by and by. He took the book and secreted it.

At noon, he asked permission to go and see Claus, and it was given. Eric remained at home, for he wanted to finish a letter to Professor Einsiedel that he had begun some time ago. But Roland did not go to see Claus; he sat down under the lofty willows by the river-bank, steadily reading, with occasional glances at the stream.

What does this mean? Here is a champion, an inspired one, a God-revering champion, fighting for civilization and against slavery. He read of a man, whose name was John Brown, who was hanged on the gallows at Harper's Ferry for his attempts to abolish slavery. He read and learned how Parker had prophesied a mighty struggle; and these words fell into the youth's soul like a spark of fire: "All the great charters of humanity are written in blood."

He read on and on, until he could see no longer for the darkness. And now it occurred to him that he had meant to call upon Claus, and he hurried towards the village.

Eric met him as he was going, and was very angry at being deceived.

"Where have you been?" asked Eric.

"With this man;" handing Eric the book.

Roland had eaten forbidden fruit from the tree of knowledge, and Eric was surprised to see how deep an impression had been made upon the youth. A new and difficult task was before him, to keep the youth from saying anything in his father's presence.

"Who is Brown?" inquired Roland. "Can you tell me about him?"

Eric told him. He narrated the martyr's history, and dwelt with emphasis on the fact, that even in our day life is offered as a sacrifice, and that a pure self-surrender raises to the sublime even the man wearing a captain's gay uniform of the present day. He wanted to show, incidentally, that the costume of every age and every condition in life could be the symbolic expression of the highest greatness; but Roland did not go along with him, and he had the apparently difficult task of justifying, or, at least, of explaining the position of Sonnenkamp, who had incontrovertibly taken the opposite side.

"Yes, yes," exclaimed Roland; "now I remember you said, when we were with the Russian at Wolfsgarten, 'You could not imagine that a white boy and a negro boy could be comrades.' Are you, too, a friend of slavery?"

Eric tried to explain his meaning; and, while striving to reconcile the difference, he was pleased to notice how open the youth's soul was to every impression, and how tenaciously it clung to things spoken of only in a cursory and incidental way.

Eric sat with Roland until it was very late; he was obliged to satisfy his ingenuous mind, and this was almost the hardest task that had ever been laid upon him. The youth was to be made to perceive that there was another way of considering the question, one that regarded slavery as justifiable and a righteous necessity; he was never to let his father know that he considered him in the wrong, and that he had happened to become acquainted, through the Professorin, with a spirit that ought not to have been conjured up in this house. Eric called to mind his mother, who had admonished him, with reason, that he was to adopt that course of instruction for Roland which was necessary, and not that which the youth himself preferred. Circumstances now rendered it necessary to follow only that track which the youth had entered upon for himself. It was a matter of rejoicing that he had of himself struck out the path; it was just what all education proposed: and now was he to turn aside from this track, and to shatter in pieces the abiding fundamental principle, Thou shalt, and thou shalt not?

"It seems to me like a dream," Roland went on to say; "a great negro once held me in his arms; I remember distinctly all about him; I remember his woolly hair, and how I pulled him by it; his face was smooth, without any beard at all."

"The negroes have no growth of beard," added Eric, and the youth continued, dreamily: —

"I have been carried by negroes — by negroes."

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He continued to repeat the word in a lower and lower tone, and then became silent. Suddenly he passed his hand over his brow, and asked, —

"Are the people who are slaves fond of their children? Do you know any song they sing?"

Eric had very little to say in reply. Roland wanted to know how all the ancient nations regarded slavery. Eric could give him only a superficial statement; he proceeded to open his letter to Professor Einsiedel, and requested that he would tell him what books treated upon the subject of slavery among the Jews, Greeks, Romans, and especially the ancient Germans.

When Roland was at last ready to go to bed, he produced Thomas à Kempis, and placed it beside Theodore Parker.

"I would like to imagine," he said, "how they would regard one another, if they stood side by side. I fancy Thomas à Kempis to be an extremely devout, refined monk; and when I imagine Theodore Parker, I think of him as a grandson or great grandson of Benjamin Franklin."

Eric was more and more amazed, for he saw how deeply Roland had thought about them both.

Thomas à Kempis makes men recluses, leads them continually into themselves, and then above the human world; Parker also leads men into themselves, but afterwards out of themselves and into the world around them.

When Roland and Eric went, the next day, to post the letter to Professor Einsiedel, they saw the boat coming up the river, on which were the Mother and Sonnenkamp. They made a signal, and repaired to the landing. Roland was astonished that Manna had not come with them, for his father had promised to bring her. Sonnenkamp went on in advance with Eric, and asked after the household. He seemed in a very bad humor.

Roland detained the Mother, and when the others were out of hearing, he asked her: —

"Did Manna tell you too that she was an Iphigenia?"

"No. What did she mean by that?"

"I don't know."

The Mother pressed her lips together; she had some idea of what she meant; she understood her lamentation, and her thankfulness to God, for having called her to endure the extreme of woe. She inquired about the connection in which the expression had been used, but Roland interrupted her by telling her that he had read the book which she had forgotten.

The Mother was startled, but felt more at ease when Roland related to her that Eric had set him right in the matter, and that he himself would be sure to keep the secret.

Nevertheless, she was deeply troubled, on reaching the villa, at having brought hither a spirit which could not dwell under the roof. The freedom of her soul was taken away, for that which she had kept in concealment had now begun to exert an influence openly. It was no longer subject to her control, and it might suddenly appear in a frightful and perplexing form.

Frau Ceres was sick again. Fräulein Perini could not be spared a moment, and sent her thanks for the kindly greeting of the Professorin and Sonnenkamp.

Like a child who is always bright and cheerful, always living in the present moment, disturbed by no confusion, and no subtleties of thought, — so appeared the Major, and every one took delight in his steadfast and natural equability. He thought it was well that Manna had not returned now; when the castle was completed, it would be just the nicest thing: out of the convent into the castle. He should be glad when they were all together again; he couldn't stand this everlasting starting off and bursting away from each other like a bomb-shell; there wasn't a better and finer place than right here in the country, and they couldn't get anywhere more than sky, and water, and mountains, and trees.

The Major cheered up the company, who were sitting at the tea-table in a strangely absent mood. The Professorin afterwards accompanied him home. She sat talking with Fräulein Milch until it was quite late, and appointed her as first assistant in the charitable organization. She seemed exactly fitted for it, as she knew everybody and everybody's circumstances. She desired that, for the first thing, a dozen sewing machines should be distributed in the surrounding villages; she would herself teach the women and girls how to use them.

The Major and Fräulein Milch accompanied the Mother back to the villa by starlight. She was refreshed and strengthened. Her soul was peaceful, and a saying of Goethe's seemed to be sounding within her: — "Thou canst not perceive what thou art by reflection, but only by seeking to perform thy duty."

She had a work before her that would uplift her and the whole neighborhood.

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CHAPTER VII.

A NEW DOOR IN THE WALL.

THE Professor's widow accompanied the Doctor for several days in his professional rounds. She obtained in this way, by direct observation, an insight into the country life.

She laid before Sonnenkamp a plan matured by herself and Fräulein Milch, which he very readily assented to, especially that part relating to the furnishing of sewing machines. Besides being an American "institution," this would create a good deal of talk. He made a trip to the capital himself, and bought the machines.

He took great pleasure in hearing the widow speak of the satisfaction she derived from having the ability to do so much good, formerly through the Princess, and now through Herr Sonnenkamp.

"How does it happen," he inquired of her, "that the poor, or the comparatively poor, are united together so much more closely than the rich?"

"I have never reflected upon the matter," she replied with an embarrassed smile, "but if I should now express an opinion upon it, I should say, that the rich man clings to his property, and is obliged to think of himself; he can't do otherwise. He is not permitted to survey the lot of others; his soul, his eye, if I may use the expression, does not have the beseeching glance of him who sits forlorn by the wayside. But the poor man is hoping, waiting; he has nothing but a bundle in his hands, or probably nothing but his empty hands; he is independent of others, and dependent on them too."

Sonnenkamp was very eloquent in praise of this considerate, indulgent view, as he termed it; and the Professorin was delighted with the polite manner and the delicacy of this man, apparently so bad and selfish.

"Perhaps," she continued, blushing deeply, "perhaps we might take an illustration from the animal world."

"In what way?"

She was silent, and only replied after Sonnenkamp had repeated the question:—

"I will give you my thought, crude as it is. I was thinking of the beasts of prey who live singly; and wolves only herd together when there is some common booty to be got, the rest of the time, each living by himself. The herbivorous animals, on the contrary, live together in herds, and afford a common protection."

She interrupted herself smiling, and then continued:—

"My wisdom is of yesterday, and it is not worth very much. The field-guard, Claus, told me that, in autumn, the birds which feed upon grain assemble in flocks, but those which live upon insects do not."

Sonnenkamp was very amiable. The Professorin added in continuation:—

"But yet the granivorous birds are no more virtuous than the insectivorous; each kind lives in accordance with its own law."

Sonnenkamp became more and more charmed with the Professorin; she spread his table with viands which could not be imported from abroad, and which the garden did not supply.

The journals, day after day, now published Herr Sonnenkamp's praiseworthy endeavors to ameliorate the condition of the people. The Cabinetsräthin came, and congratulated him upon the excellent result, adding that, according to a report from her husband, this noble deed of Herr Sonnenkamp had been noticed in the highest quarter.

Sonnenkamp was now exceedingly zealous. He was anxious that there should be no intermission in the public notices, and that something should be said about him every day. Pranken, however, who had returned from his farming escapade, showed that it would be better to hold up a little, and then to come down upon the public with a fresh sensation. He had evidently heard of the good impression which the Professorin had made at the convent, and of the earnest exhortation to Manna; and when Sonnenkamp unfolded to him his plan of having the Professorin reside there permanently, he immediately assented to it.

A path was laid out from the villa to the vine-covered house, through the beautiful meadows and along the river-bank. Sonnenkamp invited the Professorin, on a certain day, to accompany him into the garden, and all the family must go with them.

A new gateway had been made in the wall which surrounded the park. Sonnenkamp said that the Professorin should be the first one to pass through it. He gave her the key, and she opened the gate. She went through it and along the pathway, followed by the whole family, and Pranken among them.

They proceeded to the vine-covered cottage, and the Professorin was amazed to find here all her household furniture, and the library of her husband arranged in good order.

Aunt Claudine was here too; for Sonnenkamp had contrived that she should be released from Clodwig.

Sonnenkamp introduced, with a sort of pride, his valet Joseph, who had made all

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these arrangements, as a native son of the university.

The Professorin expressed her thanks to Joseph, and shook hands with him.

Pretty soon the Major came; and when the Professorin inquired after Fräulein Milch, he stammeringly made an apology in her behalf. It was plainly wrong in his view, that Fräulein Milch should so persistently refuse to go into society.

The Professorin had not recovered from her amazement and satisfaction when Clodwig and Bella arrived. Provision had been made for a cheerful repast in the garden, and Roland gave expression to the general feeling, when he said: —

"Now I have a grandmother and an aunt, safe in their nest."

In the evening, Eric received a large package of books and a letter from Professor Einsiedel, and also a large sheet of memoranda. He commended Eric's intention of writing a treatise upon the idea and nature of slavery, as it would prove a very fertile theme.

Eric put away the books, for he regarded it as a fortunate thing that Roland's thoughts were occupied neither upon slavery nor free labor, nor any kindred topic, but with something entirely different.

The son of the Cabinetsräthin, the cadet, was now at the newly acquired country-seat, on furlough, and he exhorted Roland to be diligent, so as to be able before long to enter the military school.

Roland was now wholly bent upon entering the highest class, at the earliest possible moment. He spoke of it daily to his father and Pranken. The father one day took him aside and said: —

"My child, it is well, and I am glad that you are so diligent in getting fitted, but you will not enter — take notice, I show my respect for you by this communication; I look upon you as a grown-up and mature man."

He stopped, and Roland asked, —

"When is it that I am to enter?"

"Come nearer, and I will whisper it to you; you are to enter when you are a noble."

"I a noble? and you too?"

"Yes, all of us; and for your sake I must become ennobled, as you will see by and by. Do you feel glad at being made a noble?"

"Do you know, father, when I first began to respect nobility?"

Sonnenkamp looked at him inquiringly, and Roland continued: —

"At the railroad station, where I saw a crazy, drunken man. Everybody showed respect for him, because he was a nobleman, a baron. It is a great thing to be a nobleman."

Roland now gave an account of the meeting on the morning after his flight, and Sonnenkamp was surprised at the astonishing effect produced upon him, and at the lasting impression everything made. He now said: —

"Give me your hand, as a pledge that you will say nothing about this to your master, Eric, until I shall tell him myself. On the word of an officer."

After some delay and deliberation, Roland gave his hand.

His father now proceeded to explain to him how disagreeable it would be to enter the military school under a citizen's name, and while there to be ennobled.

Roland inquired why he was not to say anything about it to Eric.

His father refused to tell him why, demanding unconditional obedience.

And so Roland had now a two-fold secret to keep, one from his father, and the other from Eric. The youth's soul was distressed, and it found an odd expression in the question he once put to Eric: —

"Do the negroes in their native land have nobles too?"

"There are no nobles in their own right," replied Eric; "individual men belong to the nobility only when, and only so long, as others regard them as such."

Eric had thought that Roland's zeal for the military school had excluded all his former notions and speculations; but he now saw that they were still active, and had become connected with odd associations, which he could not explain to himself satisfactorily. But he took heed to make no further inquiry.

During his furlough, the son of the Cabinetsräthin was very constant in attendance upon the lessons given to Roland, and Sonnenkamp, having her sanction, proposed that the young cadet should leave the school for a time, and be instructed in company with Roland.

Roland was highly pleased with this plan, but Eric objected; and when Sonnenkamp stated to him that he had formerly desired that Roland should have a comrade who should receive instruction with him, Eric found great difficulty in explaining to him that it was now inexpedient; that the course of instruction he had undertaken with Roland was adapted exclusively to him, and that now any comradeship, and any reference to another's condition and progress, would be only a disturbing element.

Eric, by this means, alienated not only

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Herr Sonnenkamp and the Cabinetsräthin, but also for a time his pupil himself, who was out of humor and refractory, after the cadêt had returned to the capital.

CHAPTER VIII.

STEEL-TRAPS IN THE POETS' GARDEN.

SONNENKAMP prided himself in growing the best wines; but the traditional account of the joyous celebration of the harvest-home is a mere fable. In the morning the mists were hanging far and wide over the valleys, and in the early evening they shut out the whole landscape. The leaves had fallen from the trees, and the hoar frost glistened on the bare twigs, when at last the grapes were gathered and pressed.

The Major would not allow it to be thought of for a moment, that they should omit firing their salute; he took extreme satisfaction in his two comrades, Eric and Roland, who fired at his word of command, so that the three reports sounded as one. But this was the whole celebration of the merry harvest-home.

Fires had been already made at the villa, and Sonnenkamp's pride in each stove having its own chimney was shown to be well founded. But it was a truly festive occasion when the Professorin had a fire kindled for the first time in her sitting-room. She had invited Eric and Roland to be present, and Fräulein Milch happened to be there. And as they sat together before the open fire-place, in serene and homelike content, it would be hard to say precisely what it was that made them so cheery and peaceful.

The Mother exhorted Eric to resume his habit of reading aloud, in the cosy winter evenings, some great poems, and he promised to do so. He felt that he must make some extra effort to dispel the coldness produced by his refusal to receive as a pupil the son of the Cabinetsräthin.

Sonnenkamp, who had an extensive hunting-park, sent out cards inviting some persons of the best society to a hunting-party. Invitations also came from the neighbors, and Eric was able to be present with Roland at a great hunting-party as often as once a week.

Roland was proud of his father's skill in the chase; he was regarded by all as the leader, and the whole company listened with pleasure to his accounts of grand hunts in America. He had even made a short excursion to Algiers, and there shot a lion, whose skin was now under his writing-table; it was meant for a sleigh-robe, but here in the country, a merry sleigh-ride was a rare thing.

The supper after the chase, in a large apartment fitted up for the purpose, was always of the merriest sort. The Major was here in his element, and officiated as lord of the castle; he spoke of the evenings which Eric enlivened at Villa Eden by reading the ancient and modern dramas; he never knew before that there were so many fine things in the world, and that one individual man could make everything so plain merely by his voice.

Eric had read aloud almost without exception one evening every week. The impression made upon the hearers was various. The Major always sat with his hands devoutly folded; Frau Ceres reclined in her easy-chair, occasionally opening her eyes, to show that she was not asleep; Fräulein Perini was employed with some hand-work, which she prosecuted steadily, exhibiting no emotion; the Mother and the Aunt sat there quietly; Sonnenkamp had a standing request that they would excuse his rudeness. Turning to Roland, he said good-humoredly, —

"Don't get this bad habit — don't get in the way of having a stick in your hand to whittle."

And so he sat and whittled away, occasionally looking up with a fixed stare, holding the knife in his right hand and the piece of wood in his left; then he would resume his whittling.

Roland always seated himself opposite the reader, so that Eric must look him in the face. Often, until it was very late, Roland would talk with Eric about the wonderful things he had been listening to.

Eric had been reading Macbeth, and he was glad to hear Roland say, —

"This Lady Macbeth could easily be transformed into a witch, like one of those who came in at the beginning."

Another time, when Eric had been reading Hamlet, he was not a little surprised at hearing Roland say to him in the evening, before going to bed, —

"Strange! Hamlet, in that soliloquy, speaks of no one returning from the other world, when, only a short time before, the spirit of his father had appeared, and he appears again afterwards."

One evening, after Eric had read Goethe's Iphigenia, Roland said, —

"I can't make out at all why Manna said once that she was Iphigenia. If she were Iphigenia, I should be Orestes. I, Orestes? I? Why was it? Do you understand Manna's meaning?"

Eric said no.

One evening when the Physician and the Priest were present, Sonnenkamp requested

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Eric to read aloud Shakespeare's Othello. Eric looked at Roland. Will not Roland be stirred up to fresh questioning concerning the negroes? He had no reason he could assign for declining, and he could contrive no excuse for sending Roland away.

Eric commenced reading. The fulness and flexibility of his voice gave the requisite expression to each character, and he preserved the proper distinction between reading and theatrical presentation. He brought out no strong colors; it was an artistic embodiment that allowed the outlines of form to appear, but gave no coloring; it was not an imitation of life, but a simple outline drawing of the general features, softened but sufficiently defined.

The Doctor nodded to the Mother, as much as to say that Eric's interpretation was very pleasant.

For the first time, Frau Ceres listened with eager attention, without leaning back once during the whole evening; she continued bent forward, and her countenance wore an unusual expression.

Eric read on continuously, and when he was giving the close of Othello's sorrowful confession of guilt, in a voice struggling with tears, like one resisting the inclination to weep, great tears ran down over the pale face of Frau Ceres.

The piece was ended.

Frau Ceres rose quickly, and requested the Mother to accompany her to her chamber.

Fräulein Perini and the rest of the ladies went away at the same time. The men were standing up, and only Roland remained sitting, as if spell-bound to the chair.

Glancing towards the Doctor, the Major said, —

"Isn't this a really wonderful man?"

The Doctor nodded.

The Priest had his hands folded together; Sonnenkamp surveyed his whittlings, placing them in a little pile together, just as if they had been gold-shavings, and even bending down to pick up some that had fallen upon the floor. Now he straightened himself up and asked Eric, —

"What do you think of Desdemona's guilt?"

"Guilt and innocence," replied Eric, "are not positive natural conceptions; they are the result of the social and moral laws of humanity. Nature deals only with the free play of forces, and Shakespeare's plays exhibit to us only this free play of natural impulses in men and women."

"That's true," interrupted the priest. "In this work there's nothing said about religion, for religion would necessarily soften, ameliorate, and rule over the savage natures, conducting themselves just like natural forces, or rather would bring them into subjection to the higher revealed laws."

"Fine, very fine," said Sonnenkamp, who was quite pale; "but permit me to ask the Captain to give me an answer to my question."

"I can answer your first question," Eric rejoined, "only in the words of our greatest writer on æsthetics: The poet would characterize a lion, and, in order to do it, he must represent him as tearing in pieces a lamb. The guilt of the lamb does not come into question at all. The lion must act in accordance with his nature. But I think that the deep tragedy of this drama lies hidden."

"And what do you think it is?"

"This maiden, Desdemona, without mother, brother, or sister, grown up from childhood among men, might love a hero, whose lyric, childlike nature, craving love and clinging fast to her, would make him crouch like a tamed lion at her feet. This submissive strength, renouncing no element of its wild energy, but, as it were, purified and exalted, opens the well-spring of that love which covers everything else with oblivion, overcomes the difference of race, and washes clean out the black color of the skin.

"When Othello kissed her for the first time, she closed her eyes, and he kissed her on the eyes; and her eyes are closed not for one instant merely, but for a long period. But an unparallelled horror, a wild insanity, would be the result of this shutting of the eyes when Desdemona should hold in her arms a child, who should appear, in its whole exterior, strange, abhorrent to her, like some creature that did not belong to the human race. Out from her heart, crushed and trampled under foot, there must have come a shriek of agony. A child upon her breast, a creature so unlike herself! That look, which Hegel describes as the highest of all that the eye can express, the first look of the mother upon the child, that first mother's look must have killed Desdemona, or made her raving mad."

Sonnenkamp, who had all the time been rapidly shifting the whittlings about with his fingers, now threw them all upon the floor in a heap, and went up to Eric, holding both hands stretched out at length. His huge frame trembled with emotion, as he cried out: —

"You are a free man, a freethinker; you are not to be humbugged. You are the first one that ever gave me a reasonable explanation of this antipathy. Yes, it's so. The

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instinct of the poet is wonderfully prophetic. 'Against all rules of nature!' This is the expression of Desdemona's father, and this is the whole solution of the problem. On this expression the whole turns, and every part is in harmony with it. The result must be, as it is, a product of nature. It's against nature!"

The men who were present had never before heard Sonnenkamp speak in this way, and Roland, who had been staring fixedly before him, looked up as if he must convince himself that it was really his father who was speaking. In an exultant tone, for he observed the effect produced upon them all, he continued: —

"Marriage — marriage! The Romans understood what was meant by that. Where marriage is in violation of nature's laws, there can be no talk of rights of humanity, equality of rights. Apes, with all their boasted reason, nothing but apes, are these silly preachers of humanity, who build up their theories and universal crotchets, without looking at the facts, and know really nothing of these brutes endowed with speech, who are not human beings, but everlastingly apish and malicious! Ho, ho! thou noble friend of humanity!" he exclaimed, striding up and down the room, "Marry thy daughter to a nigger, do that! do that! Be in terror, every moment, that he will tear her limb from joint. Hug a black grandchild! do that, noble friend of humanity! then come to me and harangue about the equality of the black and the white race!"

Sonnenkamp had clenched his fists, as if he were clutching an antagonist by the throat; his eyes flashed, his lips opened, and his jaws snapped together like a tiger leaping upon his prey. He now suddenly placed his hand upon his breast, as if making a powerful effort to hold himself in control.

"You, Herr Captain, and the poet, have taken me somewhat by surprise," he said, with a constrained smile; and then he again repeated that Eric had gone to the root of the matter. That a white girl could not become the wife of a nigger was no prejudice, but a law of nature.

"I thank you," he said in conclusion, turning once more towards Eric; "you have given me a great deal to think about."

The men looked at each other in astonishment, and the Doctor added, in a timid way very foreign from his usual manner, that he must give his assent to this on physiological grounds, for it was a well-known fact that mixed races, in the third generation, became sterile. A separation of the races, however, does not exclude human rights, any more than it excluded human duties; and religion laid them upon all alike.

While saying this he turned towards the Priest, who felt himself called upon to state that the negroes were susceptible of religious conviction, and capable of receiving religious instruction, and that this secured to them the full rights of men.

"Indeed!" exclaimed Sonnenkamp. "Is that the fact? Why then did not the Church ordain the removal of slavery?"

"Because the Church," replied the Priest quietly, "has nothing to do with ordaining anything of the kind. The Church directs itself to the human soul, and prepares it for the heavenly kingdom. In what social condition the body of man, the outside covering of this soul, may be, we have nothing to do with ordaining or determining. Neither slavery nor freedom is a hindrance to the divine life. Our Lord and Master called the souls of the Jews to enter into the kingdom of heaven whilst they were Roman citizens, and under subjection. He called all nations through his apostles, and did not stop to ask about their political condition and constitution. Our kingdom is the kingdom of souls, which are one and the same, whether they live in a republic or under a tyranny, whether their bodies are white or black. We are glad to have the body free, but it is not our work to make it so."

"Theodore Parker takes a different view," Roland suddenly exclaimed.

As if a bullet had whistled close to his ears, Sonnenkamp cried, —

"What? Where did you find out about that man? Who told you about him? How's this?"

Roland trembled all over, for his father seized him by his shoulders and shook him.

"Father!" he cried out in a manly voice, "I have a free soul too! I am your son, but my soul is free!"

All were amazed. Nothing more would be said about his voice changing.

Sonnenkamp let go his hold, his breast heaving up and down as he panted violently for breath. Suddenly he exclaimed, —

"I am very glad, my son; that's noble, that's grand. You are real young America It's right! fine! splendid!"

They were struck with fresh amazement. This sudden change of mood in Sonnenkamp took all present by surprise. But he went on in a mild tone, —

"I am glad that you were not to be

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frightened. You have good pluck — it's all right. Now tell me where you found out about Parker?"

Roland gave a true account of matters, except that he said nothing about Parker's name having been mentioned by the Professorin when they were making their calls in the town.

"Why didn't you speak of it to me?" asked his father.

"I can keep a secret," replied Roland. "You've tested me yourself on that score."

"That's true, my son; you have justified my confidence."

"We ought to have gone home a long time ago," said the Major, and this was the signal for the company to break up.

The Major had never felt his heart beat so violently, never when stationed on some exposed outpost, never even in battle, as during the reading; and yet it beat worse, after the conversation had taken so threatening a turn.

He kept shaking his big head, and stretching out with his hands in the air deprecatingly and beseechingly, as if he would say, —

"For heaven's sake, drop this talk! It's not good, 'twill only do harm!"

Then he took another look at Sonnenkamp, shrugging up his shoulders. "What *does* the man mean," he thought, "by talking to us in this style! We wouldn't put a hair in his path; what's the use of stirring us up in this matter! Oh, Fräulein Milch had the right of it, when she urged him to stay at home to-day.

How comfortable it would be to be sitting in the arm-chair, in which Laadi is now lying! And one might have been asleep two hours ago, and now it will be midnight before one gets home! And there's Fräulein Milch sitting up, and sitting up, till he comes in. It was like being saved, when he took out his watch, and could say how late it was.

The Professorin came back at this moment, and told Roland that his mother wished to see him. Roland went to her.

Eric accompanied his mother and the rest, as they set out for home through the snowy night.

CHAPTER IX.

THE BIRD OF NIGHT IS SHOT.

Eric walked in silence with the ladies. The Mother spoke first, saying, —

"I am glad that here, again, I have words of your father's to support me. Nothing is more weakening and more to be avoided than repentance," he often said; the acknowledgment that we have made a mistake must come, quick and sharp, but then we must reconcile ourselves to circumstances. I have deeply repented no matter how much good I may do, that I have bound myself to this family so firmly that any drawing back or loosening of the ties is extremely difficult. But now that it is done, we must endeavor to make everything turn out for the best."

The Aunt, who spoke but little, added how painful it was that people over whose lives hung some dark crime were banished, as it were, from the kingdom of the spirit, and must meet everywhere with terrible reminders.

They went on again for a while in silence. High above, from the mountain crest, they heard the screech-owl, the harbinger of extreme cold, uttering his dreadful cry, which rose and died away with a mingled tone of lamentation and of triumph. The party stood still.

"Ah," said Eric, "what trouble Herr Sonnenkamp has taken to destroy all the owls in the neighborhood; but he cannot do it."

They walked on once more without speaking. Everything seems a sign and a portent to an excited mood. Hardly breathing the words aloud, the mother said that Frau Ceres' emotion was incomprehensible. She had thrown herself on her neck, sobbing and weeping.

"I do not know how to explain it," she continued; "there is some deep mystery here, and it troubles me."

Eric told them of what had passed among the men, and how Roland, to his alarm, had spoken of Parker. It was plain that Sonnenkamp wished to erect into a moral system the existing relations of slavery.

"Nothing more natural," answered the Mother. "Whoever stands in such relations all his life long, must make something for himself which he calls moral principle. I cannot help thinking of your father again; he has shown me a thousand times how people cannot bear to confess to themselves that their life and actions are bad; they feel obliged to prop them up with good principles. Yet, as I said, we must be quiet, we have one good young spirit to be led to noble ends; that is our part. Whence it sprang, or through what past life it may have come to us, is not for us to determine. The past is our fate, the present, our duty. There's another saying of your father's; and now good-night."

With a more composed mind, Eric returned to the villa. The owl had flown from the mountain, and was now perched

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on the top of a tree in the park, boldly sending forth its cry into the air. Eric heard it, and Sonnenkamp heard it in the ante-room of his wife's chamber. There must he, the father and husband, wait till his son came out, admittance having been refused him while his wife spoke to Roland. At last the boy came out, and his father asked him what his mother had said: he had never done so before, but now he felt obliged to do it.

Roland answered that she had really said almost nothing; she had only kissed him, and cried, and then asked him to hold her hand till she went to sleep, and now she was sleeping quietly.

"Give me Parker's book," said Sonnenkamp.

"I haven't got it now; the Professorin took it away from me, and blamed me very much for having read it secretly, and before I was old enough."

"Give my regards to Herr Eric; you have a better teacher than I thought," said the father.

Roland went to Eric's room, but he had not yet returned.

The owl's cry was heard again from the tree-top in the park. Roland put out the light, opened the window, took his rifle from the wall, fired, and the owl fell from the tree. Roland ran down stairs, met Eric, and told him that he had hit the bird; he then hurried into the park and brought the creature in.

The whole house was in alarm. Frau Ceres was awakened, and her first cry was:

"Has he killed himself?"

Sonnenkamp and Roland had to go to her room again, to show that they were alive. Roland took the dead owl with him, but his mother would not look at it, and only complained of having been deprived of her sleep.

The father and the son withdrew, and Sonnenkamp praised Roland for having brought down the bird so promptly and boldly.

Eric went back to his mother, who must also have been awakened by the shot, and he found her still awake; she too had feared that it had been some suicidal shot.

The whole house was in a commotion, and it was some time before it could be restored to quiet.

In his pride at having shot the owl, Roland forgot everything else, and went contentedly to bed and to sleep.

But above in the castle, and below in Sonnenkamp's work-room, lights burned late. Eric sat gazing at the flame, and strange forms moved confusedly through his mind. There was Shakespeare's play, there were all the people who had listened to it; but more than all he tried to enter into Roland's mind; and it seemed a fortunate thing to him, that the boy's love of sport had driven away all wondering speculation from his mind. Action, action alone makes free. Where is it, the great all-liberating power? It does not show itself. Independent of our will, and of reflection, there is a great power in the Past and in the view of God working in it, which alone can bring forth the deed. The deed is not ours, but to be armed and ready is in our power.

At last Eric found rest.

Sonnenkamp paced up and down his great room like a prisoner. The lion's skin with the stuffed head lay upon the floor, and the eyes stared at him, till he covered the head with a part of the skin. He asked himself again and again what he ought to do. This Herr Eric was teaching his son to oppose him, and the Mother, who was always regaling them with sayings of her husband, preserved in spirit, forever calling up, as Pranken says, her husband's wandering ghost, the departed Professor Hamlet — no, she was a noble woman.

But why had he taken upon his shoulders this beggarly family, so puffed up with their own ideas? He could not shake them off, without attracting attention. No, he would make use of them, and then throw them away.

At last, a happy resolution quieted him. We must have new surroundings, new diversions; and then, straight to the goal! The day after to-morrow will be New Year's day. On New Year's day we will go to the capital. With this thought Sonnenkamp also found rest at last.

CHAPTER X.

PLAYING COURT.

THE first thing in the morning, Roland wanted to carry the owl, which lay frozen outside his window, to Claus, who knew how to stuff birds.

All the events of the past day seemed to have vanished from his mind, leaving no trace, in the joy he felt in his splendid shot.

"Stop!" cried Roland suddenly, as he was stretching out the owl's wings, "stop; I've just thought of what a man said to me in my dreams; he looked like Benjamin Franklin, but he was thinner. I dreamed that I was going to battle; the music was making a great noise, discordant, and broken by shouts, and every now and then the man said: "A good name — a good name" — and then there suddenly appeared thou-

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sands of black heads, nothing but black heads, a perfect sea of them; and they all gnashed their teeth, and I woke up in dreadful agony."

Eric could not answer, and Roland went on:—

"To-day is the last day of the year; we ought to enter upon a wholly new world to-morrow; I don't know why, but I long to have it so."

Eric laid his hand on the boy's brow, which was feverishly hot.

Roland was summoned to his mother, who wanted him; Eric watched him thoughtfully as he went; he felt also that a new page was to be turned, without knowing what it was to be. He looked towards the door, for he expected that Sonnenkamp would send for him. The man had shown on the previous day such new and strange moods that an explanation was necessary. What would it be? This could not be guessed. As if in a vision, Eric saw Sonnenkamp in his own room, in a state of the greatest excitement, sometimes bursting out violently, then calming himself again. He heard the steps of two people approach his room. Roland entered, holding his father's hand.

"Mother is asleep again," he said, "but there is some news. Eric, we are going to the capital together, to stay all winter."

"Yes, I have decided upon it," said Sonnenkamp, in confirmation, after saying good-morning to Eric, "and I hope that your mother will go with us."

With calm deliberation, he went on to say that gay society would be good for all of them, after the loneliness of their retired life in the country; and, with a watchful look at Eric, he added:—

"We shall meet your friend Clodwig, and his charming wife, at the capital."

Eric looked at him calmly, and said that he should feel it to be his duty to meet all of Herr Sonnenkamp's social acquaintances.

"I have thought much about last evening," began Sonnenkamp, seating himself near Eric. "You are a learned and also a bold man."

His manner was extremely polite, almost affectionate, for he was inwardly happy when he could play the hypocrite; whenever he could make fools of all around him, he felt an elevating and sustaining satisfaction. He was in such good humor that he said to Eric:—

"I hope to convert you; to make you see that the best way of living in the world is to hold yourself a stranger in it, and not to bother yourself about the immediate regulation of the affairs of state."

"In some respects," answered Eric, "Aristotle agreed with you; he lived generally in Athens, having a sort of certificate of residence without being a regular citizen, and without being responsible either actively or passively in the choice of rulers; for only in this way, as an alien, could he live wholly in his ideas."

"I like that. One is constantly hearing something new and sensible of the old philosophers. Then Aristotle was free also to go wherever he pleased? That's good!"

Sonnenkamp looked amused. These learned gentlemen are very convenient; they know how to find great historical reasons for what we do selfishly or thoughtlessly. He smiled in a friendly way, and his smile did not disappear, though Eric explained that what befitted a philosopher like Aristotle very well would not do for everybody; for if every one were like him, the world could not last; who would undertake municipal and state affairs?

Sonnenkamp still smiled. This German pedagogue is a funny fellow, he thought to himself; the very hour before starting on a journey, he is ready for a learned discussion. Looking extremely well pleased, he said to Eric:—

"I am very much obliged to you; one always learns something of you; you are always up to the mark."

Every word was meant to give a stab, but Eric took it quite seriously, and was grateful for the gratitude of Sonnenkamp, who was inwardly excessively diverted by this man, so childishly unsuspicious with all his learning.

He desired Eric and Roland to make the necessary preparations for the journey, and then left the room, a servant having come to say that his gracious lady was ready to see his master.

He entered Frau Ceres' room. She looked at him languidly as he said he was glad she was better, and that she would be able to undertake the journey to the capital on the following day. In glowing colors he represented the pleasant life in the city, upon which they had a sure hold through the family of the Cabinetsräthin, Count Wolfsgarten and his wife, and also through Herr von Endlich's family.

He added in a very confident tone: "Be strong and charming, lovely Frau Ceres; you will return to these rooms a Baroness."

Frau Ceres sat up, and only mourned that the dresses ordered in Paris had not yet arrived. Sonnenkamp promised to telegraph directly, and promised also that the Professorin should go with them, so that the entrance into society could be made under her auspices.

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"You may kiss me," said Frau Ceres.

Sonnenkamp did so, and she said, —

"I think that we shall all be very happy. Ah, if I could only tell you my dream, but you never like to hear about dreams, and it is better that I should not tell it. But there was a bird with great wings, enormously large, and I was sitting on the bird, and was carried through the air; and I was ashamed because I was not dressed, and all the people below were looking up at me, and hooting, and shouting, and laughing, and then the bird turned its head round, and it was the Professorin, and she said: You are so splendidly dressed! and then I had all my ornaments on, and my lace-trimmed satin dress — but I know you don't want to hear my dream."

Sonnenkamp left the room in good spirits. The day was bright, a keen, cold, sparkling winter-day, when the whole landscape, every rock, every tree, stood sharply out against the blue sky; the ice had closed over the Rhine, and a strange quiet, like a repressed breathing, lay over the whole scene.

Sonnenkamp was glad that the bright daylight had driven away all the spectres of the night, and brought fresh life. He immediately gave orders in the stable, that two pairs of horses and a second carriage should be sent to the capital. An hour afterwards, as he was walking with Eric and Roland to the vine-clad cottage, they saw the horses, covered with warm blankets, on the high-road, already on their way to the capital. Roland begged that his pony might be sent also, and permission was given; then he asked which dogs he might take, and when told that only one must go he could not decide which it should be.

The Professorin's large sitting-room looked like a yearly fair; on tables and chairs lay great packages of knit and woven woollen garments for men and women. Fräulein Milch was reading from a large sheet of paper the names of various needy people, and a list of the articles intended for them, while the Mother and the Aunt compared the bundles with the list.

When this was done, Fräulein Milch called in Claus, with his wife and daughter, and the Seven-piper with his whole family. They were directed to deliver the bundles to the people to whom they were addressed, and were very ready to undertake the work.

"It's very well that you don't give any money," said Claus; "but there's something wanting."

"What is it?"

The entrance of Sonnenkamp and Roland prevented his replying.

Sonnenkamp expressed much pleasure with the discreet manner in which his money had been used, and spoke a few friendly words to Fräulein Milch, whom he had not seen since the morning when Roland was missing.

He asked for the Major, and learned with regret that he had not been well during the night, and had not slept till nearly morning, so that he was probably still asleep; he had, happily, a constitution which always recovered its tone by sleep.

The Professorin asked to be excused, as she wished to send off the things before she attended to her early visitors; she now asked Claus what he meant by saying that an important thing was wanting.

"Yes," said the huntsman, "Herr Sonnenkamp is just the man for it."

"For what?"

"I mean that it is all well and good to wrap people up and protect them from the cold; but hilarity and joy are still lacking, and I think something ought to be done about warming up inside, and it wouldn't go amiss to send every one of them a bottle of wine. Every year the people see the vineyards before their eyes, and work in them, and most of them don't ever drink so much as a single drop of the wine."

"Good!" said Sonnenkamp. "Go to the butler, and tell him to put with every bundle a good bottle of last year's wine."

Sonnenkamp was in a most lavish mood, for he put, besides, in each bundle a gold-piece; but he almost spoiled the whole by saying to Claus, —

"You see how much confidence I have in you. I have no doubt that you will deliver it all faithfully."

All the huntsman's jolly good humor seemed damped, but he restrained his anger, and only pressed his lips tightly together.

Roland helped carry the bundles to a cart which was waiting before the house. Sonnenkamp wanted to prevent him, but the Mother made him a sign to let him do it. With the last package, Fräulein Milch disappeared.

In the emptied room Sonnenkamp told the Professorin of his plan of removing to the capital, and begged her to accompany the family.

Gratefully, but most positively, the Professorin declined; and Sonnenkamp had some trouble in hiding his vexation, when he found that no persuasions could change her decision. He took leave politely, but

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out of humor, and Roland promised to leave Griffin with her as a guard.

The Professorin felt that the boy wanted to be doing something for her while he was away, and to sacrifice for her something which he cared for.

"Life will go well with you," she said, as she pressed his hand.

Roland felt a thrill through his whole being; he had received one of the holiest of blessings, though it was given in such simple words.

The Professorin had promised to come that evening to the villa, where they were all to watch out the old year.

When she came, she found great black chests in the hall; in Frau Ceres' parlor all the chairs were covered with clothes, and Frau Ceres was as happy as a child, directing everything with an activity never seen in her before. At last they all repaired to the dining-room and sat down to tea.

All felt that a great break had come in their life; while the conversation went on easily and continually no one noticed the time, and all believed that it would be very hard work to keep awake till midnight. The Professorin felt the strain, the haunting ghost, if one may so call it, of the impending separation; they were, in fact, no longer here, no longer together. She said more of this than she really meant to, and told them of her entrance into the great world.

Frau Ceres was very attentive, and kept begging her to go on. Suddenly she rose and asked her husband to leave the room with her. Sonnenkamp soon reappeared, and begged the Professorin to do his dear little wife a favor. She declared herself quite ready; and it seemed she was to play the Princess, Eric the Court-Marshal, Sonnenkamp the Prince, and Aunt Claudine the Mistress of Ceremonies. The Aunt resisted the arrangement, and blushed deeply; but the Professorin persuaded her, and managed to make her take the *rôle* of the Princess.

After a little waiting, the folding-doors were opened. Eric stood at the door with a wand, and led Frau Ceres, who glittered and beamed in diamonds and pearls, to the throne of the Aunt.

The Aunt condescendingly dropped very slightly the fan which she held, and Frau Ceres made a truly courtly reverence.

"Come nearer," said the Aunt. "It is very good in you to take up your abode in our country."

"It was my husband's wish," answered Frau Ceres.

"Your honored husband is very benevolent."

"I thank you," replied Frau Ceres.

"If I were in your place," exclaimed Sonnenkamp, "I would say, Your Highness, it is our duty, and we are highly rewarded for it by its meeting your gracious notice."

"Please write that out for me, I will learn it," said Frau Ceres, turning to her husband. She seemed to have grown younger, and her cheeks glowed.

The Professorin was extremely animated, and after saying: "I am your Mistress of Ceremonies," she led Frau Ceres to a seat.

"No, not so, — you must look after your train a little, and spread it out handsomely. So, — that's right, and then open your fan, you have the right to open it now, but not before. It is best to have it hung to your wrist by a small cord; it falls so easily."

The jesting went on merrily; when twelve o'clock struck, Roland cried: —

"Father, now your health is being drunk by hundreds of people."

Sonnenkamp kissed his son, Frau Ceres kissed the Professorin, then bent her head and waited calmly for a kiss on her brow from her husband. Outside, the bells rang, and guns were fired.

"Welcome to the New Year! to fresh life!" cried Eric, as his pupil gratefully kissed the hand which grasped his own.

In the neighborhood of the villa, there was much noise of guns and shouting; and Sonnenkamp was quite indignant that the good German police should allow such doings; it was nothing but rude vulgarity.

Eric said. on the other hand: —

"We can find in this inharmonious noise, if we consider it psychologically, an expression of joy. Without knowing it himself, the insignificant man who fires off a pistol, takes pleasure in the sense of surprise that he can produce an effect so far off, and that so many people must notice what he does. So this custom, barbarous in itself, is to be explained; it gives force to the human voice, you see, to the vociferous shouting."

Sonnenkamp smiled, and Eric was glad that he had brought, not his pupil alone, but the father also, to a gentler view of humanity.

But Sonnenkamp thought: This walking university, these ready catechetical answers on every subject, begin to grow a little tedious; it is well that we are going into a wider circle.

Then he smiled, and bade Eric and Roland a cheerful good-night.

Warmly wrapped in furs and attended by

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two servants, the Professorin and the Aunt returned to their own house; and soon all was still, and every one dreaming of the New Year.

CHAPTER XI.

THE ICE BREAKS UP.

In the morning, when Eric and Roland were saying good-by at the green cottage, a message came from Fräulein Milch to offer herself and the Major that day, as visitors to the Professorin.

The Professorin praised to aunt Claudine the tact of the housekeeper, who evidently felt that they would be lonely on that day.

It was snowing steadily, and from her closed window the Mother made a sign of farewell to her son and to Roland, who drove by in the first carriage, and afterwards to Herr Sonnenkamp and Fräulein Perini, who bowed from their carriage: Frau Ceres lay in the corner, closely wrapped up, and did not move.

The Major and Fräulein Milch soon arrived. The Major kept himself under strict military discipline, and allowed no slight indisposition to change his stiff bearing; he was rather hoarse, and could say even less than usual, but he offered the congratulations of the New Year to the ladies with as much cordiality as formality.

"This year," he said, "will complete the fifty years that we have lived together."

He pointed to Fräulein Milch, and his hand said, Not a better creature walks the earth. But his looks said still more, which was not so easily understood.

They had a very cheerful dinner, and Fräulein Milch told them how many pleasant things she had already heard about the valuable presents, in the various houses.

The Major forced himself to master his indisposition, to be fit company for the three ladies; he praised the Professorin for knowing how to make such excellent soup, though she was such a learned lady.

"Yes, yes," he laughed, "I've really had to force Herr Sonnenkamp to have soup at his table. You see, if I had to go a day without soup, I should feel as if I were wearing my boots without stockings; the lower story of the stomach is cold."

They laughed at this comparison, and the Major thus encouraged, continued:—

"Yes, Frau Professorin, you know everything; can you tell me how it is that though this day is just like yesterday, we feel that there's something peculiar about it because it's New Year's Day? I feel as if I'd put on clean clothes for the whole year."

Again there was a general laugh, and the Major chuckled, well pleased; he had done his part, now he could leave the others to themselves.

After dinner, the Professorin insisted that the Major must take his nap; she had had the library warmed on purpose, and the Major was not a little proud that he was to sleep in the arm-chair there.

"Ah," he said, "I can sleep as well as the best Professor; but so many books, so many books! it's frightful to think that a man can read them all! I don't understand how it's possible."

The Major slept the sleep of the righteous; but he would have had no rest if he could have guessed what was passing between the ladies.

Fräulein Milch sat at the window by the Professorin, who listened in astonishment as the simple housekeeper said how strange it was that Eric should have consented to read the harrowing drama of Othello; the Major had been driven almost crazy by it, and, besides, there were so many points in it which could not be touched upon in the family.

"Do you know the play?" asked Frau Dournay.

"Indeed I do," replied Fräulein Milch, her whole face flushing to her very cap-border. Then, to the Professorin's surprise, she went on to remark upon the poet's wonderful stroke of art in placing the young married pair on the island of Cyprus, where strong wine is produced and drunk, not always in moderation; for in that solitude, and under that hot sun, wild, burning passions were fostered, too. The greater the happiness of a fondly loving pair on such an island, the more miserable would they be if any discord rose between them.

The Professorin listened as if a new person were speaking, whom she had never known before; but she said nothing of her thoughts, only asking:—

"Do you think then that the play was unsuitable to have been read there because Herr Sonnenkamp has been a slave-holder?"

"I would rather not say more about it," said Fräulein Milch evasively. "I do not like to talk about the man; it rejoices me,—no, that isn't the right word,—it makes me easier that he scarcely notices me, and seems to think me too insignificant to be looked at. I am not angry with him for it, but rather grateful, because it is not necessary for me to look at him; and friendliness towards him would be hypocrisy."

"But you must not turn me off in that

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way. Can't you tell me why you thought it unsuitable for being read?"

"I cannot."

Aunt Claudine, thinking she saw that Fräulein Milch had something to tell which was not for her to hear, quietly left the room.

"Now we are quite alone," said the Professorin, "you can tell me every thing. Shall I assure you that I can keep a secret?"

"Oh, I am only sorry that I have gone so far," stammered Fräulein Milch, drawing her cap-strings through her fingers. "It is the first time for fifty years that I have paid a visit, or eaten at a stranger's table; I ought not to have done it; I have not yet gained self-control enough."

Her face quivered, and her brown eyes glowed.

"I thought that you looked on me as a friend," said the Professorin, holding out her hand.

"Yes, so I do," cried Fräulein Milch, seizing the hand with both her own, and pressing it with fervor. "You cannot tell how I thank God for having granted me this before my death; since I devoted myself to him, I have renounced all the world; you are the first — oh, I think you must know all, you need be told nothing."

"I do not know all. What do you know of Herr Sonnenkamp?"

Fräulein Milch hung her head sadly, then put both hands before her face, crying, —

"Why must I tell you?"

Then she rose, put her mouth to the Professorin's ear, and whispered something. Frau Dournay threw her head back, and grasped the sewing-machine, which stood before her, with both hands. Not a word was spoken. Outside, all was still, except for the cawing of a flock of crows which were hovering over the Rhine.

"I do not think you would tell me such a thing on a mere rumor," said the Professorin at last. "Go on, and tell me plainly how you learned it."

Fräulein Milch looked round timidly, and answered: —

"I have it from the most trustworthy of men, whose nephew has sent a child here to be educated; he knows the name which Herr Sonnenkamp formerly bore, and all about his past life. But, dear, noble lady, why should not a man be able to take up a different life, a new existence, whatever he may have done?"

"Of that another time," interrupted Frau Dournay; "tell me the name of the man who has told you this."

"So be it then. It was Herr Weidmann."

The Professorin covered her face with her hands. "What are you saying of Herr Weidmann?" asked the Major, entering suddenly. "I can tell you, Frau Professorin, that any one who doesn't know that man, doesn't know one of the best and truest men in the world. He's one of God's masterpieces, and God himself must have satisfaction in him; every day, when He looks down from heaven, he must say: The world isn't yet so bad, for down yonder I have my Weidmann; he is a man — a genuine man. Everything is included in that, there's nothing more to be said."

Both women felt a sense of relief in the entrance of the Major, who now prepared to go home with Fräulein Milch. After they had gone a few steps, the Professorin called Fräulein Milch back, and asked in a whisper, —

"Does the Major know, too?"

"Oh no, he could not bear it. Forgive me for having laid such a burden on you. Believe me that it is not made lighter to me, but heavier."

The guests departed; and soon after, the postman brought a letter from the University-town. Professor Einsiedel, who for twenty years had brought his New Year's greeting to Frau Dournay, did not choose to fail in it to-day; they were cordial and significant words which he wrote, but they seemed to come from a different world. Twice she read the postscript, for there was a greeting for Eric, with the message, that the Professor would soon send him a book on slavery which was announced as just published; and he added the exhortation that Eric should finish his work within the new year.

The Professorin looked thoughtfully at the words. What did it mean? Eric had never spoken to her of any such work. She passed her hand through the air before her brow, as if she would drive away every strange thought. A recollection rose within her. This very morning she had been expressing her sorrow to Aunt Claudine that she could no longer dispense any charity of her own, though it was the duty of every one to give from his own store. What she did seemed nothing; only the gifts seemed of importance. Almost involuntarily, she opened the box in which lay the money that Sonnenkamp had intrusted to her. How could she say in future to those who received it: You must not thank me, but Herr Sonnenkamp.

She collected herself, and went to the li-

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brary, where she stood gazing out of the window. It seemed as if something were actually gnawing at her heart. In spite of inward reluctance, she had allowed herself to be brought into these relations, and her power of clear and intelligent perception seemed clouded.

Down the river there was a heavy roar, with a sharp cracking sound, as if a new world were opening; the ice had broken up. Great blocks were floating down the stream. They were hurled against each other, turned over, crushed into fragments, brought together again, and floated on. Every block, large and small, was crowned with a wreath of snow, formed by the icy splinters that were ground to powder and thrown on top by the breaking up; the fragments floated down the river so swiftly that one realized, for the first time, how rapid and strong the current always is.

The sun set in a glowing sky across the Rhine; half aloud, the Professorin said to herself: —

"This first day of the year, which is now declining, has brought me a terrible experience; it must be borne, and turned to some good end."

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BOOK IX. CHAPTER I.

ARRIVAL AT THE VICTORIA.

A LINE of carriages was standing in front of the Hotel Victoria in the capital; multitudes of sparrows were fluttering about them while the drivers stood together in groups, or walked to and fro, bandying jests with one another, and beating their arms across their chest to keep off the cold.

The sparrows quarreled together, and after picking up all the crumbs they could find, took their flight. The drivers had exhausted their jokes and lapsed into silence. What more could be said and done on a winter's afternoon in the snowy, deserted streets of the capital? Everything is as still as the blessed prince whose stone image stands on the great column, with a cap of snow on his head and snow epaulettes on his shoulders. The parade is over, the officials are sitting in their offices, and the shutters of the Casino are closed for the better enjoyment of the cards by lamp-light. There is a change of guards at Prince Leonhard's palace, over the way; the soldiers wear large cloaks, and carry pistols. The man released from duty whispers something, which seems to be of no great moment to the one who succeeds him. An official messenger carrying a bundle of papers comes along, meets a court-lackey wrapped in a long coat that almost touches the ground; exchanges a pinch of snuff with him, and passes on. Such is the life of a small capital on a winter's afternoon.

But now wide awake! there is something going on. A great stir began among the coachmen, and up came the courier Lootz, with a wagon load of trunks.

Now there was abundant material for conversation. It was fine to have this "Gold-nugget, the King of California," come to the capital.

"Run up to your father, the bell-ringer, and tell him to set all his bells going," cried one.

"Give me a drink that I may shout a good huzza," said another. "Now begins a merry winter for us. Gold-nugget will scatter more money than three princes, and seventeen counts, with seven barons into the bargain."

"Let me tell you something," chimed in a third. "Let's send a deputation to him when he arrives; he will do it, he is just the fellow for it. I've a plan."

"Out with your plan."

The man thus addressed, — a little hump-back, with intelligent, cunning eyes, — kept his comrades in suspense for a while, and then said, —

"We will petition Herr Sonnenkamp to give every coachman a daily pint of wine. He will do it, you see if he doesn't. If I had seventy millions, I would do it too."

A broad-shouldered, somewhat disreputable-looking coachman said, —

"I have been a hotel-keeper myself; I know what that means. The landlord of the Victoria has got a winter guest who will keep the house warm, and the wheels well greased."

Within the hotel, meanwhile, were none but smiling faces. Even the handsome landlady was handsomer than ever to-day, as she took a final survey of the sumptuous suite of rooms on the first floor, and found that all was in order, only a covering here and there still remaining to be spread. The feet of the butlers, waiters, and maids, as they hurried to and fro, made no sound on the thick, soft carpets. The gorgeous silk furniture glistened and gleamed, as if grateful at being freed from its mourning wrappers, and allowed to show itself to the light.

Lootz was full of business; he seemed bent upon trying every kind of sitting-place; now one chair and now another, here a sofa and there a lounge, he ordered to be differently arranged. Even the beds he appeared disposed to test, but contented himself with pressing the springs up and down a little. One blue silk boudoir, that opened on a charming balcony, he re-arranged entirely with great skill and excellent taste.

All was at last ready.

When evening came on, the whole long suite of rooms was illuminated; all the burners in the chandeliers, on the tables, and on the mantles being lighted. The entrance hall was decked with flowers. Now they might come.

The head-butler, with a cigar in his mouth, stepped into the streets and surveyed the row of windows with great satisfaction; but with still greater, did he look across the streets at the residence of the Crown-prince, where all was dark and deserted; how jealous they will be there!

A carriage drove up full of the servants of the establishment, men and women, then another, in which were Eric and Roland, and finally appeared a coach drawn by four horses. Bertram drew up at the door, and out stepped Herr Sonnenkamp followed by Fräulein Perini, and lastly by Frau Ceres, enveloped in the costliest furs.

The coachmen before the house forgot their agreement, and raised no cheers for Sonnenkamp. Amidst utter silence he and his family entered the vestibule, where the bearded porter in a laced coat and broad-

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brimmed hat presented his silver-headed cane. He stood motionless as a statue; only his eyes sparkled. His face assumed a satisfied expression as they ascended the warmed, lighted, and flower-hung stair-case. Frau Ceres was not in good humor, having slept almost the whole way; she sat down before the open grate, and consented after a while to have her furs taken off.

Sonnenkamp inspected all the rooms, saying, when he came to those intended for Roland and Eric, —

"All the comforts of this world have their price; those who have nothing must turn coachmen, and freeze down there, waiting for a passenger."

He returned to his wife's boudoir, where Frau Ceres was still sitting motionless on a luxurious seat before the fire.

"What shall we do to-day?" she asked languidly.

"There is still time to go to the theatre."

"Dress myself over again? I won't."

Here, happily, the Cabinetsräthin was announced.

She was greeted with words of welcome, and very welcome she was. She apologized for not having been on the spot to receive her dear friends and neighbors upon their arrival, as she had intended, but a visit from Countess Graben had detained her. They thanked her, and were enchanted at her obliging politeness.

Eric and Roland were summoned to receive the Cadet, who had come also.

"Where is your mother?" inquired the Cabinetsräthin. "She is coming presently, I hope?"

Eric did not answer, and Sonnenkamp quietly interposed, saying that the Frau Professorin was unwilling to give up her country-life.

"That will cause general regret," returned the Cabinetsräthin, smiling as if she were saying something very amusing. "All the beau-monde are depending upon having this amiable, witty, universally esteemed lady another season among them."

"She must come," said Frau Ceres.

Sonnenkamp was sorely vexed. Did the whole glory of his house depend upon the esteem in which this woman was held?

His displeasure was increased by the lady's adding in a confidential tone, —

"The accomplishment of our beautiful and noble plan will be much hindered and delayed by the absence of the Frau Professorin, *neé* von Burgholz," as she always took pains to add. Herr Sonnenkamp would hardly be able to draw the best society to his house, she thought, without the lady's presence, adding, with what she meant for an expression of great modesty, that she should spare no exertions on her own part, but that she could not accomplish nearly as much as the Frau Professorin *neé* von Burgholz.

The numerous lights in the great drawing-room appeared to Sonnenkamp's eyes to burn less brightly; he had sufficient self-control, however, not to betray the extent of his vexation.

The Cadet proposed that Roland should take part in a quadrille, which was to be performed on horseback by the first nobles of the court, towards the end of the month; in the royal riding-ring he could find a place as squire among the other citizen cadets, and engage in some of the evolutions.

Roland was delighted at the idea, but Herr Sonnenkamp cut the matter short by saying, —

"No! you will take no part."

He did not give any reason; there was no need to say that he did not choose to have his son make his first appearance among the common people admitted on sufferance.

The Cabinetsräthin had plenty of court news to tell, such as who had already given entertainments, and whose balls were still to come off, besides many a piquant bit of gossip, only half told on account of the presence of the children. The betrothal of the eldest son of Herr von Endlich, whose superb house was so famous, was soon to be celebrated, though there was reason to fear that tidings of death would soon be received from Madeira, whither the young pair had gone who were married in the summer.

The Cadet invited Roland to go with him to the theatre that evening, to see a grand ballet.

Eric looked in embarrassment at Sonnenkamp, who however said, —

"Certainly; go, Roland."

For the first time Eric saw his pupil led away from him, and taken to a place of entertainment, among a class of people, whither he could not accompany him. His heart trembled.

Roland had asked that Eric might go too, but the Cadet explained that there were no more places to be had; it was with great difficulty that he had been able to secure one for his friend. So Roland departed, saying to Eric as he went, —

"I shall come back to you as soon as it is over."

Eric became more tranquil. He could not prevent Roland's falling into company,

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and receiving impressions, which threatened the subversion of all his noble tendencies. He could only trust that his will and his conscience might be strong enough to withstand the danger.

Half with pride and half with regret, the Cabinetsräthin told of her son's precocity and cunning in the pursuit of adventures, and lamented almost in the same breath that Manna should be passing this brilliant season in the solitude of the convent; it would have been so pleasant for her, together with Frau Ceres, to introduce such a lovely girl into society.

Sonnenkamp replied that next winter would be time enough for that.

CHAPTER II.

THE FIRST NIGHT IN THE CAPITAL.

Eric soon withdrew; he went to his chamber, but found no rest. Here he was, in the city where he had been born and brought up, living in a strange hotel, and in the service of a stranger. He quickly fought down these reflections and the weakness they engendered, and wrote a letter to his mother announcing their arrival, and begging her to let no persuasions induce her to come to the capital. He took the letter to the post himself, and spent some time in wandering through the quiet, deserted streets of the little capital. He knew every house in them. Here and there lived some companion of his youth, some family friends; what relations he should hold to them now he could not tell.

He passed the great building where the antique relics were kept, and for a moment allowed himself to fancy what his position would have been, if he had received the post of director here.

He walked restlessly to and fro, and finally entered a beer-house, took his place in a corner, and listened to the talk of the men, who, with long pipes in their mouths, were laughing at each other's poor jokes, and discussing matters of all kinds.

His attention was roused by the mention of Sonnenkamp's name; a stout, red-faced man was saying, —

"I must begin now to take my very best meat to the Victoria, for Herr Sonnenkamp knows what is good."

A printer whom Eric recognized said, "Our editor, Professor Crutius, declares that he knows Herr Sonnenkamp, but he isn't willing to tell us anything about him."

Eric's interest was still further excited. The men went on to tell of the immense sum daily paid to the landlord of the Victoria, then of Sonnenkamp's reported purchase of the Rabenecke palace, and of his admission to the ranks of the nobility as being a thing as good as settled. Here some remarks were made, in too low a tone for Eric to catch, which raised a general laugh.

"I call you to witness," said a stout man whom Eric recognized as a flour-dealer and baker, "that I say now this Herr Sonnenkamp is sent on a secret mission. The young nobles in the South want an emperor, and this Herr Sonnenkamp's designs to aim higher, perhaps, than any of us imagine."

"Then you can go with him and be court-baker," said one, whose rejoinder was received with a burst of laughter.

"What's that to us?" said another; "the man brings plenty of money into the country. If a hundred of them came, I don't care what they are after, as long as they bring us their money."

The speaker was a short, round-bodied little man with a great meerschaum pipe. He emptied his covered glass as he spoke, and called out to the bar-maid, —

"Bring me a fresh one; I have deserved it, for I am the cleverest of the lot."

Eric slipped out of the room, glad not to have been recognized.

At the door he received a friendly greeting from a young man whom he had no recollection of having seen before, but who recognized him as one of the singers at the musical festival. He was a teacher in the scientific school in the capital, and announced to Eric that he had been proposed to the school-teachers' union as an honorary member.

Eric thanked him and passed on; meeting in the street a great stream of people and carriages coming from the theatre; he hurried to the hotel, that Roland might find him there on his return, and happily arrived before his pupil. He waited in his room, but no Roland came; he went to the drawing-room, but he was not there; on the contrary, he was himself asked if Roland had not yet returned.

The Cabinetsräthin observed, with a smile, that they need feel no uneasiness, for Roland was with Cuno, and of course enjoying himself. She expressed her regrets that she too must now take leave of the company, and, drawing Sonnenkamp into the embrasure of a window, presented him with an Almanach de Gotha for the new year, a book which, as she gracefully remarked, should henceforth never appear without the name of Sonnenkamp being in it; and she bound herself from this day forth to pay him taxes in the shape of this canonical book, to be delivered to him yearly as long as she lived.

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Sonnenkamp was duly grateful, and escorted the lady to her carriage.

On returning to the drawing-room, he said to Eric: —

"I had supposed you would have made Roland more worthy of confidence; in spite of his promise, he has not come home."

Eric was tempted to answer that it was the father, not he, who on this very first evening, when the boy was hardly out of the carriage, had given him permission to go his own way. He restrained himself, however; any discussion would be useless.

"I cannot go to bed till he comes," complained Frau Ceres.

"Have you any idea where we can look for him?" asked Sonnenkamp of Eric.

"It is not necessary, for here he is," returned Eric.

Roland entered.

His mother began to complain and his father to scold, because he had not kept his word.

"I deserve neither complaints nor reproaches," said Roland. "I had great difficulty in getting away from the company at the door of the restaurant whither I accompanied them, but would not go in."

All was made smooth again, and they went to bed.

"Why do you not ask me how I enjoyed the theatre?" asked Roland when he had entered his room.

"I preferred waiting for you to tell me."

"It was very fine; there were beautiful girls, and Cuno knew them all by name, and had some story to tell of every one; stupid stories they mostly were. For hours we had nothing but leaping and bending this way and that, without a word being spoken. Suddenly, I began to wonder what Benjamin Franklin would say if he could see it, and that spoiled all my pleasure. Cuno called me a snob, and I let it pass quietly, but he added something else which came near causing a duel."

"May I know what it was he added?"

"No; it was about you, but — of course you would not care for it. You are not anxious that every one should understand you, and whatever the world may say ——"

"Say no more, dear Roland, I beg; I don't care to know what people say about me; it only burdens the mind without helping us to be better. But you have borne yourself well, and may sleep with an easy conscience. This has been your first experience under fire, and will not be your last. Only keep true to yourself and to me. Good-night."

Eric lay down with happy thoughts, and with happy thoughts Roland fell asleep.

CHAPTER III.

THE GREAT WORLD IN THE LITTLE CAPITAL.

While Sonnenkamp, the next morning, was looking through the court calendar and making a list of the visits that were first to be paid, Eric, also, was arranging his programme. He determined to free his mind from every personal disquietude, as the only means of being able to devote himself to the new difficulties of his task.

In a large close carriage, made half of glass, with two servants in fur coats sitting on the box, and the footman behind, Sonnenkamp and Frau Ceres drove about the city. The question whether Roland's cards should be left too had been carefully considered, and it was finally decided in the affirmative.

Eric used the day's leave of absence he had obtained in visiting some of his old comrades, and spending some time with them at the military club. He was more cordially greeted than he expected, and the men he met were better and sounder than he remembered them. Of course the talk was of the newly-established gaming-table, of horses and ballet-dancers, but there was a prevailing seriousness among many of his comrades. The great excitements of the day, which were affecting all minds, were not without their results even in this military club. One young man, who sat in the window with Eric, went so far as to envy him for having struck out for himself an independent career.

Eric's mind grew quite light and tranquil after visiting a few more of his friends, and he returned to find the Sonnenkamp family in good humor also.

On this first day, the Cabinetsrath, with his wife and two daughters, was invited to dinner. The dresses had come from Paris, and were already the town-talk of the little capital, the custom-house officials having told their wives, and they their relations, that dresses had been received from Paris finer than any in the wardrobe of the Queen herself. They were duly admired by the ladies, and everything was in the best possible train. Sonnenkamp had his party at whist in the fashionable club-house, to which the Cabinetsrath introduced him; and as they rose from table, Bella and her husband were announced as the first visitors.

Bella's gait, manner, and dress always suggested not only invisible servants in livery to appear, but a carriage and horses besides; she always looked as if she had just left her carriage, or was about to enter it; it was so in the drawing-room, and so in the street. She was extremely

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animated, and only to Eric regretted that his mother still continued in the country. She told Sonnenkamp that Otto would arrive in a few days, with the Russian prince, for the two men were to take part in a French comedy that was to be performed at court, in which she also was to play. She made Sonnenkamp give her a considerable sum of money for the purchase of articles to be sold for the benefit of the poor, at a fair held at the beginning of the next month, by the first ladies of the capital. Sonnenkamp promised further to place at her disposal some beautiful plants from his greenhouses.

Clodwig was tired, and stipulated beforehand that little should be expected from him in the way of society. The representatives were assembled in both houses. Prince Leonhard, the brother of the reigning Sovereign, a man who had seen the world for himself, and had even travelled in America, had been chosen President of the Chamber of Lords, Clodwig being Vice-President, but having to perform most of the duties of actual President.

While they were still together, they had the pleasure of receiving an invitation from Herr von Endlich to a great ball. Bella could not help repeating what was said by the scandal-mongers, that Herr von Endlich gave his great entertainment thus early, lest the daily expected news of his son-in-law's death should prevent his giving it altogether. This was just the height of the season; they had come to town quite early enough. It was said that the Court would be present at Herr von Endlich's ball; at least the brother of the reigning Prince might confidently be expected, for he maintained relations with society quite independent of the palace. Bella was also called upon to admire the Parisian toilettes in the adjoining room, and advised Frau Ceres to reserve the handsomest for the entertainment Herr Sonnenkamp himself would give.

The evening at Herr von Endlich's was very successful. The nobility, notwithstanding the wound inflicted upon their pride by the Sovereign's inconsiderate raising of the rich wine-merchant to their ranks, were largely represented. It was a singular step for him to have taken, very unlike the almost priestly solemnity with which he usually regarded all affairs of court etiquette. He perceived his mistake, and liked to be made to forget it. A sure way of winning his favor was to show cordiality to Herr von Endlich. So it happened that the company assembled at the house of this newly made noble, was the most brilliant of the season.

Herr von Endlich was shrewd enough to invite some distinguished members of the House of Deputies, and even two of the extreme opposition, not, however, without first having made sure that the Court would take no offence at such a step. The Court itself was not present, except in the person of Prince Leonhard. He had made no secret of his disapproval of this conferring of new titles, but as a subject of his brother, he appeared at the ball, and conversed freely with the members of the opposition, especially with Herr Weidmann, the President of the House of Deputies.

Although the Prince represented his brother, and always spoke of him with great deference, he was not averse to hearing such remarks as, "Ah, if you were the ruler, there would be a different order of things; then we should have a model country." In court circles a secret compassion was felt for Prince Leonhard, because custom made it desirable, in fact even necessary, for him to affect liberal views, to popularize himself, as the aristocracy called it. He encouraged arts and sciences, and even political movements; the journal which was understood to be secretly supported by him slightly favored the opposition.

Prince Leonhard made the circuit of the rooms arm in arm with Clodwig, which was no slight mark of distinction. The Count must have mentioned Eric to the Prince, for he called him from his place behind the first row of those who were waiting to be saluted, and said aloud: —

"I am glad to see you again, my dear Dournay; you have become a great scholar, I hear. Well, well, you always had considerable talent that way; you showed it even as a boy. How is your honored mother?"

Eric expressed his thanks, with a tone of happy relief that the first meeting with Prince Leonhard had passed off so pleasantly. No trifling compliment was paid him by the Prince, who added: —

"I should be glad if you would bring Herr Sonnenkamp to me; where is he?"

Sonnenkamp, unhappily, was not to be found. By the time he was summoned from the smoking-room it was too late; the Prince was already opening the ball with Bella.

Herr von Endlich was beaming with happiness, but Sonnenkamp's face wore a singular expression when he learned that the Prince had desired Captain Dournay to present him. A still more striking contrast existed between the dispositions of the two men. The Wine-count possessed a confident, self-satisfied manner, with sufficient tact, however, to prevent him from giving offence.

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His every word and motion plainly implied his superior knowledge on all points. He could enter into conversation with men of the most dissimilar pursuits, and make a good appearance in the eyes of all. The fact of his being financier, political economist, agriculturist, merchant and ship-owner, and thoroughly acquainted with everything connected with those pursuits, he allowed to be taken for granted; but besides these, he was able to converse with equal intelligence upon the exact sciences and all the statesmen of Europe. He was a careful observer, and knew how to turn his observation to good account.

Sonnenkamp, who was often one in a group of persons to whom Herr von Endlich would be talking, was made to feel, perhaps for the first time in his life, quite like a school-boy, in fact, extremely insignificant. He was standing with some others listening to Herr von Endlich's account of the casting of steel, when the Prince approached, and observing that the conversation ceased abruptly upon his arrival, said: —

"Pray, let me not interrupt you," and listened with apparent gratification while Herr von Endlich explained the whole process, as if he had spent his whole life as a worker in a machine shop.

Upon Sonnenkamp being presented, the Prince inquired if he had practised grape culture in America.

Sonnenkamp replied in the negative.

With a sudden change of subject, the Prince then asked again whether he knew Theodore Parker, whose preaching he had heard with pleasure.

Here again Sonnenkamp was unfortunately obliged to say no, feeling himself wretchedly poor and ignorant.

The Prince perceived the stranger's embarrassment, and desiring to introduce a subject on which he could not fail to be at home, asked whether he believed in the possibility of a peaceable settlement of the slavery question.

The bystanders listened with interest, while Sonnenkamp proceeded to state that the horrors generally associated with the idea of slavery had no actual existence, and that the abolitionists might be very well intentioned, but certainly they did not set to work in the right way.

"You must tell me more about this matter of slavery sometime; you must come to see me."

"Your Highness has but to command," replied Sonnenkamp, most happy that the conversation should end here.

Eric stood through the greater part of the evening near Weidmann, but desirous as he was of giving his undivided attention to the excellent man, he found it impossible to keep his eyes from wandering towards Bella. Bella was in the highest spirits. There was something Juno-like about her appearance. There was a dignified ease and a magnificent fulness of outline, with a look of pride and self-possession; she had a significant word for some, and a lighter for others; age she cheered, youth she made more gay, and all with an inimitable grace and nobleness of manner.

A constrained expression sometimes hovered about her lips, but as she passed from one to another she had a cheerful smile for all, and there was a magic charm in her friendliness. Even in her outward appearance she remained a mystery, for no one could tell the exact color of her eyes, though all were fascinated by their glance.

You might hate Bella, but you could not forget her.

Such must have been Dr. Richard's experience. The Doctor had been unjust to her, Eric thought, for Bella's leading principle was ambition, and ambition directed to great ends would appear like greatness. The feeling that he also had done her injustice, made his manner towards her more friendly and respectful. Bella seemed to divine what was passing in him, and nodded to him from time to time graciously and significantly.

Eric's manner set her mind completely at rest; for in fact she had sometimes secretly thought: What if this tutor should boast — pah! no one would believe him. Besides, he is by nature too noble to boast.

And what had happened between them, after all?

She had already found a subject of pride in her first contrition; having begun by persuading herself that the whole thing had been a passing exuberance of spirits, a tempting pastime, nothing but sport, in fact.

And who could contradict her?

She appeared to herself in the light of a heroine who had gloriously overcome temptation.

Her rehabilitation was so complete as to become the main fact in the case; indeed, the whole thing seemed to her like a romance she had read in some book; it had certainly made a great impression upon her, it had ended differently from what she had expected; but now it was finished, done with, laid aside, returned to the desk of the library. Yes, Bella could laugh at the idea of her still being so impressionable; she was almost proud of being still so naïve in

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her feelings, still capable of being carried away. Now it was all over, and she was ready for something else.

She exchanged a few words with Eric and Weidmann, rejoicing that the two had found one another, and hoping that Eric would often come to see Clodwig and herself, that so they might enjoy some more intellectual talk together, and be brought to a knowledge of their true selves in the midst of this whirl of society. She also asked Eric to take her some day into the Cabinet of Antiques, and give her some instruction about them. With a tone of sisterly advice she reminded him that etiquette required the making of certain visits on his part, in order not to be left out of society.

She was rejoiced to hear that he had already done part of his duty in this respect; and in reply to his remark that he had even inquired for the Sovereign's negro, but found he was spending the winter in Naples with the invalid princess of the royal family, she asked:—

"Ah? Herr Sonnenkamp sent you then to the nigger on some special commission?"

Eric replied that he did not understand the question, upon which Bella hastily changed the subject, saying that it was only an idle jest; and soon afterwards she was laughing and talking with Sonnenkamp, and calling his attention to a man in the company, the brother of Herr von Endlich, who kept the most fashionable tailor's shop in the capital.

Herr von Endlich could not help inviting his brother, who was a person of consideration in the city; and it was thought an excellent joke, that the man who sold the clothes yesterday could see now how well they fitted his customers.

Sonnenkamp congratulated himself that he would at least have no such intolerable family connections to dread when he should enter the ranks of the nobility.

CHAPTER IV.

THE BLUE RIBBON.

EVERY evening was spent now at the theatre, or at some great entertainment. The morning did not begin till noon. In accordance with Bella's advice, Eric had made the requisite visits, and was generally included in the invitations.

He beheld this society life with fresh eyes, like one coming from another world. What lay behind these smiling, gaily-dressed exteriors, and the friendly greetings they exchanged with one another? He shuddered as he looked at the white-cravatted crowd. In the smoking-room each man vied with another in telling lewd tales, and then returned to the married ladies and young girls in the dancing-hall, and put on his most courtly manners.

Eric for the most part kept modestly in the background, but Bella was exceedingly friendly and confiding in her manner towards him. She floated gaily down the stream of intoxicating pleasures, pleased to be one of the first, if not the supreme.

The Russian prince also was very gracious to Eric, and talked to him a great deal of Knopf and of a wonderful American child at Mattenheim.

Pranken saluted him in silence, hardly ever exchanging a word with him.

By the first dignitaries of the State and the Court, Eric was kindly received, and heard from various quarters of the praise bestowed upon him by the Countess von Wolfsgarten and her husband.

Eric's acquaintance with Weidmann had reached that point where both regretted that they could see so little of each other, and yet with the best intentions could come no nearer together. Only once did they succeed in getting a deeper insight into one another, and here too, strangely enough, it was when the conversation was personal. They were speaking of Clodwig, for whom both expressed equal respect, but Weidmann could not help saying:—

"I admire this power, but I could never exercise it. Our friend has the faculty of entering heartily into the sphere in which he lives; I mean by that, he can put on and off his moods of mind as he does his dress-coat. His own tastes lead him to live among entirely different interests, interests directly antagonistic to all this whirl and confusion; but the moment he enters this sphere no trace of any antagonism appears in him; he seems perfectly in harmony with the life about him."

Eric took his meaning, and said he could now understood a reproach that he had been tormenting himself with. Weidmann's eye rested thoughtfully upon him as he spoke.

"People say, at one time, that we should try to sift every experience, should take fire at this thing or that; and again, they require us to pass over things indifferently, and let them go without a protest. I cannot do that, and therefore am not suited for society."

Weidmann appeared to take a different view of the matter that disturbed Eric, for he replied that he ought to be perfectly satisfied with having succeeded in fostering noble thoughts in a boy of Roland's character and position.

Often, whole evenings passed without

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Eric's seeing Roland, so constantly was he surrounded by the young dancers of both sexes, who praised and petted him like some favorite plaything. Every night he came home with his breast covered with favors in the German, and the day found him weary and absent. Eric noticed that perfumed notes were sometimes handed him by the porter. Any regular course of study was out of the question. Roland went about through the day, humming the music of the night before, which was still running through his head. He preserved with great secrecy in his writing-desk the cards engraved with the order of the dances, and many other souvenirs besides; and his face began to wear an expression of reserve.

Pranken was delighted to see his family, as he called the Sonnenkamps, thus admitted into society. It was now arranged that Roland should take part with the others in the French comedy. The young Countess Ottersweier, who was to take the part of a page at the court of Louis Fourteenth, was ill with the measles, and her part was assigned to Roland. A beautiful dress was ordered for him, and all his thoughts were now turned to the play and the rehearsals that were to precede it.

When the first dress-rehearsal took place, and Roland showed himself to his parents in his becoming costume of close-fitting white silk tights, they were full of admiration; his mother in especial could not restrain her expressions of rapture. Roland glanced at Eric, who for some time had been looking gloomily on the ground. He wanted to ask him why he was so pedantic, for that was what his fellow-actors called him; but he checked himself, and only said:—

"I promise you I will learn again, by and by, all the lessons you give me, only let us be merry now."

Eric smiled; he felt that his pupil was having destroyed in him what could never be repaired; but what could he do? The question indeed passed through his mind whether he should not leave, now that all he had so carefully planted and nurtured was taken and trampled under foot; and only the thought that nothing would then stand between Roland and destruction kept him at his difficult post. Still he considered it his duty to communicate his anxiety to Sonnenkamp, who comforted him by saying that American youths were ripe in years, and masters of their own lives, when Germans would be still sitting on a bench at school, and grieving under a master's criticism.

"I fear," said Eric, "that Roland is losing the best possession that man can win."

"What do you mean by that?"

"He should learn above all things to find his best pleasures in himself."

"So you would like to make a scholar of him, a man who can boil his own coffee?"

"You understand me very well, and I understand your joke. You know that what I mean to say is this, that the man who can find no pleasure within himself will find none in the world. On that point we in a manner agree with the church people, only we understand it somewhat differently. Whoever will be happy must enter into the kingdom of heaven that is open in every human soul; who does not that, is always dependent on voluntary or purchased service and respect."

Sonnenkamp listened to Eric's quiet enthusiasm with a nod of assent. He agreed with his ideas, but thought them strangely mixed with an ecclesiastical asceticism which he merely interpreted into the language of the world.

While Roland was at the rehearsals of the French play, Eric would often spend his time at the teachers' club, and was pained to find here also an aristocracy. The teachers of the higher schools were separated from those of the primary. Eric was received by many as an old acquaintance, and found himself followed by the fame he had won at the musical festival, for the teachers are the chief supporters of vocal music. They had a private singing club here, and Eric sang with his comrades more beautifully than ever.

He often stole away from this noisy company and joined the meetings of the humbler school-teachers, where he seemed to be transplanted to another planet.

Here sat the serious, earnest men, most of them worn with work, discussing questions pertaining to their calling, as how best to influence and guide a child's soul; and out in the world, a soul trained to the best of human ability was squandering the teacher's whole long and painful work in a single evening.

If we knew what was to be the result of our labors, we could not live; the best part of our own ideality is our ignorance of the future, and our belief in a full completion of our plans.

Eric could not resist telling Herr Sonnenkamp of his evenings in the school-masters' club, and Sonnenkamp was much interested in his account. He thought it very fine to have other men cultivate the ideal.

"They are happier than we," he said, as he drank his heavy Burgundy.

On the evening preceding the performance of the French play, Roland, at his fa-

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ther's bidding, invited all his fellow-actors to a party at the hotel. The gentlemen came, but none of the ladies except Bella. She took Sonnenkamp aside, and told him confidentially that he would never succeed in drawing ladies to his parties, till he had in his house the Frau Professorin neé von Burgholz. She only half acknowledged to herself that she should feel a little ashamed to meet, on her return to the country, a person with whom she had so often discussed the emptiness and worthlessness of the amusements of society, and was therefore anxious to have all brought into the vortex, that none need have to fear the reproachful glances of another; but besides this, it was perfectly true that Sonnenkamp without the von Burgholz would never accomplish what with her aid would be an easy matter.

Bella was malicious enough to tell Sonnenkamp that the Cabinetsräthin fleeced him, while in society she disowned him, and described their connection as one purely of necessity and neighborhood.

Sonnenkamp was doubly incensed, but had to look unconcerned.

The play came off. Roland's beauty and ready grace were the theme of general admiration. Even Bella, whose versatility was admirably displayed by the numerous changes of costume and character that her part had demanded, was quite thrown into the shade by the enthusiasm he excited.

The Queen summoned Roland to her side and conversed for some time with him; both were observed to smile as they talked together. The King came himself to Sonnenkamp and his wife, and congratulated them upon their brilliant son, at the same time asking when he was to enter the school of cadets.

"When a name shall have been graciously bestowed upon him," replied Sonnenkamp calmly.

The King frowned, bowed, and passed on.

Sonnenkamp drew a long breath. He had evidently made a mistake to introduce the matter at such a time and in such a way; but it could not be helped now, and forward was the word. He cast angry glances around, as if he would like to have doubled the whole glittering assembly up in his fists, and kneaded it into what shape he pleased.

His temper was not improved by Pranken coming up, and asking what he could have said to the King that had so ruffled him. Sonnenkamp did not consider it necessary to acknowledge his mistake.

Eric looked with melancholy upon the scene around him; near the pillar against which he was leaning, a beautiful palm languidly drooped its fan-shaped leaves. It perishes in the sultry air under this bright flood of gas-light, he thought, as he gazed at the plant; if it be restored to a favorable atmosphere, it still pines and perhaps perishes utterly. Will it be so with Roland too? How expect him to strive after the ideal, after a higher activity, when all this splendor and homage have been offered him?

Eric found himself, he could hardly tell why, imagining Professor Einsiedel here; and the thought called a smile to his face, for just such a Professor Einsiedel was he. What then are we who live only in the region of thought? Spectators; nothing but spectators, while there is the world with its driving and snatching after enjoyment, every one plundering and appropriating whatever he can seize. Why will you stand aside? Why not hurry and scuffle with the rest? His breath came quick and short, his cheeks glowed. He was in this mood, when Roland came to him and said: —

"If you are not satisfied with me, I care nothing for the rest."

Eric gave him his hand, and Roland continued: —

"The Queen wants me to be photographed in this dress, and so do all the ladies. The other actors will do the same. Is it not fine?"

"Certainly, it will be a pleasant memento for you by and by."

"Ah, by and by! by and by! it is pleasant now, I don't want to know anything of by and by. Oh, if we only did not have to sleep, and undress, and to-morrow be different again! If we could only live on like this for a hundred years without stopping!"

Eric perceived how completely Roland's head was turned by all the adulation he had received; it was no time now to try to turn the current.

But he himself was put in a state of unwonted excitement before the evening was over.

He had noticed Bella talking very earnestly with the Minister of War, formerly colonel of his regiment, who presently approached him, and, after saluting, and talking of indifferent matters, finally asked if he would not like a professorship in the school of cadets when his pupil entered.

Eric expressed his cordial thanks for the great kindness, but could give no decided answer. He was startled at the next question, whether he had made any definite plan

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for himself, after the completion of the young American's education; he had made none. Still more was he startled, when his questioner further asked if he should not then return to his literary and scientific pursuits, as he had heard the highest hopes expressed of him by those who had known him in the university.

Eric was perplexed; all such pursuits he had sacrificed. What was to become of him? To make matters worse, he had drawn his mother also into these relations.

After the Minister had gone, he caught Bella's fiery glance fixed upon him, and he seized the first opportunity that offered, to thank her for having so kindly recommended him to the Minister of War.

"All jealousy — all jealousy; I want to get you out of the house before that fascinating Manna returns." Bella was in great good humor.

The next day, while Roland was with his companions at the photographer's, decorated with a new blue ribbon which he had secretly fastened on his dress, and while servants were distributing cards of invitation to the great Sonnenkamp ball, Sonnenkamp himself, accompanied only by Lootz, drove to Villa Eden.

CHAPTER V.

A STRONG HAND IS POWERLESS.

The Frau Professorin was sitting at the window of the warm and comfortable sitting-room. Carpets and cushions within, and moss without, shut out every draught. The sewing-machine at which she sat moved so easily, that scarce a sound was heard from it. From the river came the noise of the grating and crashing of the great masses of ice, as they struck against one another, changed their shapes, and floated on again.

She often looked out across the river and into the country, and saw the smoke rising from the houses in the different hamlets; she was familiar with the life there now.

Accompanied sometimes by Fräulein Milch, sometimes by the huntsman, but generally by Sevenpiper, whose cheerfulness she took great delight in, she had made her way everywhere, ordering and helping with word and deed. There was a constant passing of visitors back and forth, some coming with thanks, and some with new petitions. She thought herself highly favored in being allowed an activity so abundant, and so immediately fruitful in results.

But the Frau Professorin was not without higher pursuits, for she read over again her husband's favorite books, and studied his comments written on almost every page, drawing thence a strength which enabled her to live in silent communion with the departed. Her husband's words she generally read aloud; it did her good to move her lips, and hear a voice speaking his opinions. Often also she had to read aloud, in order to drive away the thoughts which crowded upon her at all times, thoughts about Sonnenkamp, his life and character, and what he had been in the past, but especially about Manna, and the feelings that were working in her. She thought she understood now the meaning of Manna's words to Roland when she was leaving her parents' home: "I too am an Iphigenia." She repeated to herself, as she sat at work, the song of the Fates in Goethe's drama, and her heart was burdened by this mystery of the children's having to suffer for the sins of the parents.

In the midst of these sonorous and powerful lines, she heard the sound of wheels stopping before the house. Perhaps it was the Doctor coming to sit an hour with her, as he often did; she knew he liked to have her stay quietly in her place. But it was another step that approached, another knock at the door, and Herr Sonnenkamp entered.

"Are you quite alone?"

"Quite alone."

The Frau Professorin was greatly embarrassed; this was the first time she had seen Sonnenkamp since hearing that about him which she could never tell him; it required all her self-control to enable her to offer him her hand. He drew off his fur glove and grasped her hand in his. For the first time she felt the steel ring on his thumb like a cold snake. With terror she saw her hand in his. This hand of Sonnenkamp's, so thick and hard, with the fingers bent back and the flesh growing over the nails, was the hand of the Pharisee in Titian's picture of the tribute money. So between the thumb and forefinger does the Pharisee hold the piece of money, and there is an evil, violent, and hypocritical look, if we may so express ourselves, about the hand. She remembered standing one day, during her wedding journey, in the picture gallery at Dresden, when her husband covered for a moment the face of Christ and that of the Pharisee, and drew her attention to the wonderful drawing of the two hands, which in themselves revealed the opposite characters of the men. With the speed of lightning did those thoughts and images pass through the lady's mind.

Sonnenkamp observed this emotion, so unlike her usual calm self-possession, but naturally attributing it to surprise, said with ready tact: —

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"I have often noticed that intellectual persons who live much in themselves, and especially noble women of superior cultivation, are not fond of surprises; I must therefore beg your forgiveness for this one."

The Frau Professorin looked at him in amazement. How was it possible that a man, whose life in the past had been what this man's had, could understand such subtle emotions and express them so delicately? She confessed that he had rightly interpreted her emotion, and asked whether his visit was to herself, or one of inspection to his establishment. The question was an awkward one, she knew, but she could think of no other at the moment.

"My visit concerns no one but yourself," said Sonnenkamp; "and I almost regret my purpose of disturbing this beautiful repose. I come from a life of such confusion as makes it hard to believe that repose like yours can exist upon the same planet. We live in a perpetual whirl; the only comfort is that we have still the power of sleeping."

"I am familiar with this excitement of carnival time," said the lady smiling. "How we long for quiet, and yet are ever pursued by the music and laughter of the evening before."

Sonnenkamp now openly declared the object of his visit; and with great humility begged the Frau Professorin to confer upon his house the grace and dignity which she only could give it.

The lady regretted she must decline; she was no longer fitted for gaiety.

"I should not have thought your views of life would be gloomy, but rather free and cheerful."

"I believe they are. I do not consider our life as a dismal charitable institution, from which all cheerfulness is banished. It is right that youth should dance, and not think of the people who are shivering with the cold, and of the grief and misery everywhere, at the very moment they are moving so gaily. I love cheerfulness; we have no strength without it."

"Give us your help then; all the more will we devote ourselves afterward to our poor brothers and sisters of the great human family."

The Professorin had to struggle against a feeling of indignation, that would rise within her, at the idea of the man trifling thus with words like these. She looked at his hands as if there was blood upon them, and these blood-stained hands were offering her festive wine.

She could say no more, she only shook her head, repeating, —

"I cannot; believe me, I cannot."

"Then," began Sonnenkamp, "I shall proceed at once to tell you the secret of my life."

The Professorin had to put both hands on her table to steady herself. What was the man going to say! She silently inclined her head, and Sonnenkamp told how it was his unwavering desire, and a matter of necessity for his wife, Roland and Manna, that he should be raised to the ranks of the nobility.

The Professorin shuddered. What? Did this man dare to propose such a thing? The von Burgholz spirit was roused within her. How could a man with such a past as his have such presumption?

Sonnenkamp watched her eagerly. Something was going on in the mind of this woman which he could not fathom. She kept silence, making no response to the confidence he had honored her with.

"Why do you not answer?" he asked at last.

The lady controlled herself and said, as she inclined her head somewhat backwards:

"Shall you not find it hard to bear another name?"

Sonnenkamp looked keenly at her.

"I found it hard as a wife," she continued, "to bear another name."

"Excuse me, my dear lady," replied Sonnenkamp courteously; "you had to take a citizen's name; it is much easier to assume a noble one."

He exhorted her, urged his request upon her more earnestly, enforcing it by the warmly expressed wish of the countess Bella.

The Professorin insisted that no one, even though admitted to the closest friendship, could decide upon the life she should lead; she was resolved never to return to society.

Sonnenkamp was driven to extremity. He believed that the Professorin's only objection was to appearing as a dependant, and that she would no longer refuse, if a free and independent position were assured her. In a manner, therefore, at once unassuming and emphatic, he told her that he should here, and now, put into her hands a sum of money sufficient to maintain her in an establishment of her own for the rest of her life. He put his hand in his breast-pocket as he spoke, and drew out his pocket-book.

"No, sir, I beg of you," answered the Professorin, coloring deeply and fixing her eyes upon his fingers, — just so did the Pharisee hold the piece of money. "It's not that, I assure you. I am ashamed of

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no position, since I have the true honor within myself; neither do I fear, as you possibly imagine, being too deeply moved by contact with any of the relations of society. I have voluntarily resigned all connection with it. I have made no outward vow, but I beg you to respect my decision as the vow of a nun, as you would if it were the decision of your daughter. I regret that I must beg you to urge me no further, as no inducements could have any influence upon me."

It was hard for Sonnenkamp to control his anger, and restore the pocket-book to its place.

He rose and went to the window.

For some time he gazed fixedly out, then turning round with a smile, he said, —

"There in the river are floating the blocks of ice; a soft breath bursts the icy covering; why might not also, my honored friend — you will allow me so to call you — every one has in his life a something — I know not how to call it, an action, a purpose — you understand what I mean — that ought not to fetter all our future."

"Allow me to say," returned the Professorin, "that in my case this would be a breach of faith. I have nothing left in the world but fidelity to myself."

"You fill me with admiration," said Sonnenkamp, hoping to gain his point by expressions of admiring respect.

He was obliged to assume a gracious and smiling exterior while inwardly chafing, for the Professorin was immovable. There was an imploring manner about him, as if he would say: I know no way of help but through you; yet he found himself unable to put it into words.

The Professorin felt that she must do something kind to the poor rich man, must give him something to restore his cheerfulness and courage, and with hearty sincerity she said, —

"Let me express to you the thanks of the hundreds whom you have fed and comforted. You have made me very happy by employing me as the medium of your benefactions, and I desire that you should feel yourself the source of happiness to others."

With great animation she described the excellent order into which the neighborhood had been brought, and how her help had not waited for sickness, either physical or moral, but had helped forward those who were sound. She told so many beautiful and touching incidents, that Sonnenkamp could only stammer out as he gazed at her:

"It is all well — very well — I thank you."

He once more gave her his hand and left the room. At the front door he encountered Fräulein Milch, but hurried by almost without looking at her.

Fräulein Milch found the Professorin washing her hands with all her might, as if she feared she should never wash them clean from the man's touch.

"Did he tell you he was to be raised to the ranks of the nobility?" asked the Fräulein.

The Professorin looked at her in amazement. How came this simple housekeeper in her seclusion to know everything?

The butcher from the capital, Fräulein Milch said, who had been buying a pair of fat oxen from her neighbor, had spread the report.

Secrets creep out through strange channels.

CHAPTER VI.

GOLD GIVES FAME.

A STRANGER is inspecting the house, the garden, the park, the hot-houses, the stables. Who owns them all? An American, about whose past life there is a mystery.

Sonnenkamp returned to his old home-life as in a dream; he looked back upon a time long past; it was no longer himself, but a stranger who was examining the place; he who had built and planted it all was dead. Sonnenkamp smote his forehead with his hand, to banish the spell which was overmastering him. What power was weaving it over him, and depriving him of his own personality? Nothing but this woman's poor pride in her own virtue.

"I still am, I still will, and all of them shall serve me," he said aloud to himself.

He examined the trees in the garden; a pure tender covering of hoar frost upon the branches kept them motionless, and threw over all around an aspect of such stillness, yet so shining and glorified, that the spectator involuntary held his breath. Here and there trees and shrubs had been cut down by his direction, as was necessary in order that the artistic effects that were aimed at in the laying out of the park should be preserved; and Sonnenkamp never allowed the growth of the trees to exceed the conception he had in his mind when planning his grounds.

Two fine Newfoundland dogs, which had always been his close companions, he ordered to be let loose, and smiled as the creatures leaped upon him full of delight at greeting their master. There was something that could give him a joyous greeting and be glad in his presence; dogs after all were the best creatures in the world. He

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made the entire circuit of the place with the dogs, and when he reached the fruit orchard looked about him with a pleased smile; the carefully trained branches, with their mantle of snowy rime, were like the most delicate works of art. He on wished that he could transplant them ju as they were into the capital, and set them up before the astonished eyes of his guests.

His guests! Would they really come? Would not this entertainment so pompously announced end in humiliation? The branches of fruit-trees can be trained and bent at will; why are men so obstinate? Suddenly his face broke into a smile. He had heard a great deal said of a famous singer who was enchanting all Paris; she must come, cost what it would, and she must pledge herself to give no public concert, but to sing only in his drawing-room, and perhaps at court. He would offer the contemptible beau-monde of the capital what no one else could.

He had the dogs shut up again, and heard them whining and barking. That was all right; the only kind of creatures to have were those that could be sent for when you wanted them, and shut up when you were tired of them.

Sonnenkamp had the horses harnessed at once and drove to the telegraph station, whence he sent a message to his agent in Paris, stating exactly his plan, and ordering the answer to be returned to him at the capital. Animated with fresh courage, full of contempt for the whole world and of pride in his own fertile invention, he drove back to the hotel. That same evening he received the intelligence that the singer would come. Pranken was with him when the message was received.

Sonnenkamp was anxious to have the world at once informed of this extraordinary entertainment which he was able to offer them; it should be announced in the court journal. But Pranken was opposed to any such public announcement, and advised that one and another of the guests should be confidentially informed of the pleasure in store for them; and then every one would be flattered by the confidence, and would duly spread the news abroad. Pranken himself undertook to communicate the extraordinary intelligence to some of his favorite companions at the military club.

The singer came, and exercised a greater force of attraction than the Frau Professorin could have done.

Bella appeared early on the evening of the ball, and congratulated Sonnenkamp on his great success; and in fact nothing was wanting to the brilliancy of the entertainment. The popular Prince appeared with his wife, and the rooms were filled with the cream of the society of the capital; the American Consul-general, with his wife and two daughters, was present also; everywhere were heard expressions of admiration of the host, and thanks for his generosity. Frau Ceres alone was somewhat out of temper at having her own splendor eclipsed by the wonderful talent of the singer, who drew the whole company about her. The Prince talked with her a full half hour, while with Frau Ceres he spoke but a few minutes.

Sonnenkamp moved among his guests with a feeling of triumph in his heart. Outwardly he affected great modesty, but inwardly he despised them all, saying to himself, —

A handful of gold can work wonders; honor, distinction in society, everything, can be had for gold.

Two topics engrossed the conversation of the capital the next day: Herr Sonnenkamp's ball, the like of which the city had never seen, and the death of the young husband of Fräulein von Endlich, news of which had been received the evening before, but had been kept back in order not to deprive the family and numerous connections of the Court Marshal from enjoying Sonnenkamp's ball.

The next evening, the paper edited by Professor Crutius contained a witty article upon the two events, sarcastically blending the news of the death with the Sonnenkamp ball. The splendor of the occasion was thus partially dimmed, and Sonnenkamp discussed with Pranken the possibility of gaining over this poor devil of an editor also with a handful of gold.

Pranken opposed the plan, on the ground that no communication of any kind should be held with these communists, as he called all those who were not in sympathy with the government; and this man, who scorned no means that could further the plan of being admitted to the nobility, was amazed that Sonnenkamp should not be ashamed of employing bribery here.

Sonnenkamp appeared convinced, but appealed to Eric, who before had been the medium of conveying relief to the man, and desired him to put himself again in communication with him, and let him know that Sonnenkamp was ready to assist him if he were in need.

Eric emphatically excused himself.

The singer was not summoned to Court, it being contrary to etiquette that she should sing there after appearing in the house of a private citizen. She left the

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capital, and Sonnenkamp, ball, and music were soon forgotten.

Sonnenkamp was even obliged to submit to the humiliation of not being invited himself to Court. He was openly given to understand that the Sovereign had been much displeased with his having, at the French play, so awkwardly introduced a matter which needed to be handled with the greatest delicacy. Pranken told him this in a tone of malicious pleasure mixed with regret; Sonnenkamp should always keep in mind that he was to be indebted to him for his patent of nobility.

The evening of the court ball, which was the one subject of conversation throughout the capital, and which was attended by two noble families from the Hotel Victoria who had come from the country for the purpose, was a most trying time to Sonnenkamp; yet he had to hide his rage and exert himself to comfort Frau Ceres, who kept insisting on leaving the capital at once, since this was the one thing she had been aiming at, and now it was all over.

Even the Cabinetsräthin absented herself this evening, being obliged, to her great regret, as she said, to appear at Court. Thus the family sat by themselves; and this evening, for the first time, Eric managed to acquire again a firmer hold upon Roland's mind, for Roland, too, was full of indignation. He listened in silence, but with dilating eye, as Eric described the emptiness of all worldly honors if we have not a consciousness of self-respect within us; for they make us dependent upon others, and such dependence was the most abject slavery.

At the word slavery, Roland rose and asked Eric if he had forgotten his promise of telling him how different nations dealt with slavery. Eric was amazed that the subject should have dwelt in the boy's mind through all the excitement he had undergone, and promised to give him the history of the whole matter, as far as he was able, when they should return to Villa Eden.

Sonnenkamp had great difficulty in concealing his sense of injury, yet he must not give additional weight to the slight that had been put upon him by allowing his feelings to appear. The family of the Cabinetsräthin he took especial pains to load with friendly attentions. They must be made to keep to their bargain; they had had their pay, and were not to be allowed to cheat him. He made the young cadet a spy upon his son, giving him money for taking Roland to the gaming-table, tempting him to high play, and then making an exact report of his behavior. He was not a little surprised at the cadet's reporting that Roland utterly refused to play, because he had promised Eric never to gamble, even for an apparently trifling stake.

Sonnenkamp would have liked to thank Eric for this great influence over his son, but judged it best to feign ignorance of the whole matter. He begged Bella, when she came for Eric to fulfil his promise and take her to the cabinet of antique casts, not to disturb his wife's present tranquillity by referring to the court-ball.

Eric took Roland with them to the museum, and though Bella said nothing, she understood his motive for doing so. On their way thither they met the Russian prince, and Bella ordered the carriage to stop and invited him to accompany them, thinking that thus the party could divide into two groups, the Russian walking sometimes with Roland, and she with Eric; but she could not manage it so; Eric did not once let go of Roland's hand.

They stood long before the group of Niobe and her children, Bella jokingly protesting that the teacher, who seeks to protect the boy from the arrow of the god, was of the Russian type. Eric might explain as often as he would that the head was a modern addition and represented a Scythian, that the teacher was a slave who attended the boy to school or wherever he went, as one of our lackeys might, she still insisted that he was a Russian. As Eric called attention to the fact, that the maiden in the centre of the group clings to her mother Niobe and hides her face in terror, while the boy by the side of his attendant voluntarily turns toward the danger, and with outstretched hand strives to avert it, Roland gazed fixedly upon him, and turned almost as white as the plaster itself; his eye sparkled, and the soft dark hair just beginning to show on lip and chin seemed to tremble. On the way home he drew close to Eric, and trembling as if with cold said: —

"Do you remember when that letter with the great seal came to your parent's house?"

"Certainly — certainly."

"Then you should have been director, and is it not strange, here stand these figures day and night, summer and winter, waiting for us, and keeping still, and looking up while we are dancing and dying."

"What are you talking of?" asked Eric, alarmed by Roland's strange tone and manner.

"Oh, nothing — nothing. I don't know myself what I am saying. I seem to be only hearing the words, and yet am really saying them. I don't know what is the matter with me."

Eric hurried the feverish boy home.

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CHAPTER VII.

THE SCHOOLMASTER AND NIOBE'S SON.

EVERY day, whenever Frau Ceres saw Roland, she would say: —

"Why, Roland, how pale you look! Does he not look very pale?" Here she invariably appealed to Eric, and upon his answering in the negative seemed reassured.

But one day when the Mother exclaimed in terror: —

"Why, Roland, you do look so pale!" Eric could not deny it.

"I don't know what is the matter with me," he complained as Eric took him to his chamber.

"Everything seems to be turning round me," he said as he looked about the room. "What does it mean? Oh! Oh!"

He sank down on a chair and burst into a sudden fit of weeping.

Eric stood amazed.

The boy seemed to lose consciousness, and, with his eyes wide open, stared at Eric as if he did not see him.

"Roland, what is the matter?" asked Eric.

Roland did not answer; his head was like ice.

Eric gave a pull at the bell, and then bent over the boy again.

Sonnenkamp entered, to know why they did not come to dinner. Eric pointed to Roland.

The father threw himself upon the lifeless form, and a piercing cry was wrung from his breast.

Joseph was sent in haste for a physician, and by the use of strong salts Roland was restored to consciousness. His father and Eric undressed him and put him to bed, the poor boy moaning all the while, and his teeth chattering with the chill that followed the first attack of fever.

Sonnenkamp looked in terror at the anxiety depicted on the physician's face when he saw his patient.

"It is a very violent attack; I don't know what the result may be. Has he often such?" asked the doctor.

"Never before! never before!" cried Sonnenkamp.

After the application of various restoratives Roland was able again to speak, and his first words were: —

"I thank you, Eric."

The doctor left, after giving strict orders that the patient should be kept quiet, so that if possible he might sleep. After an hour of anxiety, during which Eric and Sonnenkamp scarcely ventured to speak to one another, he returned; and having examined Roland again, he pronounced that the nervous system had been overstrained, and that he was threatened with nervous fever.

"Misfortunes never come singly," said Sonnenkamp. They were the only words he spoke that night, during the whole of which he watched in the adjoining room, occasionally stealing on tip-toe to the sick boy's bed to listen to his breathing.

When Frau Ceres sent to know why they did not return to the drawing-room, they sent an evasive answer and begged her to go to bed. Having understood, however, that Roland was slightly unwell, she came softly to his bedside during the night, and seeing him quietly sleeping returned to her own room.

"Misfortunes never come singly," Sonnenkamp repeated when the next morning at dawn the physician pronounced the fever to have declared itself. He ordered the most careful nursing, and wanted to send for a sister of charity, but Eric said that his mother would be the best nurse Roland could have.

"Do you think she will come?"

"Certainly."

A telegram was at once despatched to the green house, and in an hour the answer came that mother and aunt were on their way.

The news of the beautiful boy's severe illness spread rapidly through the city. Servants in all manner of liveries, and even the first ladies and gentlemen, came to inquire after him.

The noisy music of the noon parade startled Roland as it passed the house, and he screamed: —

"The savages are coming! the savages are coming! the red skins, the savages are coming! Hiawatha! Laughing-water! — The money belongs to the boy; he didn't steal it. — Hats off before the baron, do you hear? fly! — The blacks! — Ah! Franklin!"

Eric offered to request the Commandant for an order to have the band pass through another street, or at least stop playing when passing the hotel.

A sudden thaw having carried away the snow, it was found necessary to spread straw before the whole front of the Hotel Victoria, to deaden the sound of the wheels.

Eric's mother received a most cordial greeting from Sonnenkamp, and did her best to soothe Frau Ceres, who complained that it was horrible to have Roland ill, and that she had to suffer for it, as she was ill herself. At the Mother's suggestion, which Sonnenkamp at once adopted, being only too happy to have anything to do, any new means to try, Dr. Richard, who was famil-

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iar with Roland's constitution, was also telegraphed for. He arrived at a late hour of the night, and approved of all that had been done for Roland. He laid his chief injunctions upon Eric and his mother, impressing on them the necessity of guarding themselves as much as possible from the nervous excitement attendant on a life in a sick-room, of taking plenty of rest and amusement, going out often and refreshing their minds with new images. He would not leave them till both had given a promise to this effect.

After a consultation with the attending physician he prepared to depart, but when shaking hands at parting stopped to say: —

"I must warn you against the Countess von Wolfsgarten."

Eric was startled.

"She has remedies for every possible disease; and you must politely but resolutely decline whatever she, in her dictatorial way, may press upon you."

"He is not going to die, is he?" asked Sonnenkamp of the physician, as he stood upon the steps.

The physician replied, that in extreme cases the powers of nature were all we could rely upon.

Sonnenkamp fairly shook with rage, rage against the whole world. With all his wealth he could do nothing, command nothing; but must fall back upon the powers of nature, in which Roland had no advantage over the son of a beggar!

Frau Ceres lay upon the sofa in the balcony room among the flowers and birds, staring vacantly at them, scarcely speaking, and eating and drinking almost nothing. She did not venture to go to Roland's bed, but required to be informed every hour how he was.

The entire want of union among the members of the houshold became now apparent. Each one lived for himself, and thought every one else was there only for the purpose of adding to his or her comfort.

At noon a great event occurred, nothing less than the reigning Princess sending her own court physician. Sonnenkamp was full of gratitude for this distinction, which unhappily he had to receive under such melancholy circumstances.

Day and night, Eric, his mother, and aunt sat, now by turns, and now together, by the sick boy's bed. He knew no one, but lay the greater part of the time in a half sleep; sometimes, however, in an access of fever, he would start up with a glowing face and cry: —

"Papa is dancing upon the black people's heads! Give me back my blue ribbon! Ah, ah!" Then as if in an ecstacy he would exclaim, "Ah! that is the German forest! quiet, Devil! There, take the may-flowers — blue ribbon — the boy has stolen the ring — the laughing sprite — respect to the young baron — back, Griffin!"

The touch of Eric's hand upon his forehead always soothed him. Once when his father was present, Roland sang a negro song, but so unintelligibly that they could hardly make out the words. Suddenly, however, he cried out: —

"Away with those great books! take away the great books! they are written with blood!"

Sonnenkamp inquired if Roland had ever sung the song when he was well; and if Eric knew from whom he had learned it. Eric had never heard it. Sonnenkamp's manner towards Eric and his mother was full of humble respect. He gratefully confessed that this illness, which threatened his very existence, had yet given him that which otherwise he might never have obtained. He had never believed in human goodness and unselfish devotion; but he saw them now displayed before him in unceasing activity. He would gladly kneel before the Mother and worship her, he added with an expression that came from his heart, for she had refused to come for pleasure, but was ready at once when called to night-watching and the exercise of sorely tried patience; he should never, never forget it.

The Mother felt that there was another patient here needing her care, besides the fevered boy who lay there with closed eyes. Her intercourse with Sonnenkamp became more intimate; he complained to her of his never-resting grief, and again and again would come the thought: What I desire, I desire only for this son. If he die, I shall kill myself. I am worse than killed now, and no one must know it. Here is a being who has no past, must have no past; and now his future is to be taken from him!

"Am I to have no son because I was no son?" he cried once, but quickly controlling himself he added: "Do not heed me, dear lady; I am speaking myself like a man in fever."

The Mother begged him to compose himself, for she was sure that by the mysterious laws of sympathy, any excitement in those about him would react upon the patient.

In the stillness of the night the Mother sat by the boy's sick-bed, listening to the chimes that rang out the hours from the church tower; and these bells, heard in the night by the sick-bed of the poor rich boy, brought up her own life before her.

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Eric often reproached himself for his too great indulgence, in having allowed Roland to be drawn into that whirl of excitement which was now perhaps killing him; and he remembered that day in the cold gallery before the Niobe, when the fever first showed itself. He was another whom the Mother had to soothe. She alone preserved a firm balance, and offered a support on which all others could lean. She handed Eric the letter she had received from Professor Einsiedel on New Year's day, and asked about the scientific work which she had not before heard of. Eric explained how it had all come about. His mother perceived that he had yet learned nothing of Sonnenkamp's past life, and took care to tell him nothing, thinking he ought not to have the additional burden of such knowledge at this time of anxiety for the sick boy, and of increased difficulties in the way of his training.

In obedience to Dr. Richard's strict directions, the Mother often went out to visit her old friends, among them the wife of the Minister of War, and was greatly comforted at learning that Eric could have a professorship in the school of cadets, when Roland entered the academy. She always returned home greatly cheered from these visits.

Eric, too, made calls, spending many hours with Clodwig. Bella he seldom saw, and then but for a short time; she evidently avoided now any interview with him alone.

Pranken took great offence at Eric's mother having been sent for without his advice; these Dournays seemed to him to be weaving a net about the Sonnenkamp family. He came sometimes to inquire for Roland, but spent most of his time at Herr von Endlich's, in the society of the young widow lately returned from Madeira.

Much as Eric had desired to become better acquainted with Weidmann, the whirl of society had hitherto prevented, and now that the Parliament was no longer in session, Weidmann had left the capital without any closer relation having been formed between them.

Weeks passed away in trembling suspense. The sick boy's wandering fancies took a wholly new direction. He imagined himself with Manna, and was constantly talking to her, caressing her, jesting with her, and teasing her about the picture of Saint Anthony. Manna had not been told of her brother's illness; it seemed useless to burden her with anxiety, when she could do nothing to help.

Sonnenkamp continued to be greatly vexed that there was nothing to be done but to wait for the forces of nature. He sent considerable sums of money to the poor of the capital and to all the charitable institutions; he reminded Eric of what he had told him of the teachers' union, and handed him a handsome sum for the furthering of the objects of the association.

One day he asked the Professorin if it were not possible that prayer might help the sick. She replied that she knew no positive answer to such a question, that Sonnenkamp must compose himself, and be glad if he could cherish such a beautiful faith. He looked sadly at her.

Roland talked so constantly with his sister, that Sonnenkamp asked the physician if Manna had not better be sent for, and was delighted at receiving an affirmative answer.

It was a comfort to him in the midst of his duties, to think that now he could force his child from the convent, and never let her leave him more. His heart rejoiced in the prospect of being able to have both his children with him, when Roland was well again. He walked up and down the room, rapidly opening and shutting his hands, as if he were leading his children by his side.

The careful Lootz was despatched to the convent with an urgent letter enclosing the doctor's directions, to which he would gladly have added a few words of the Professorin; but she was resolved to interfere in no possible way of Manna's plan of life, even in a case of extreme necessity, and refused to write.

CHAPTER VIII.

A SISTER OUTSIDE THE FAMILY.

Snow lay upon the roof of the convent, and upon the trees, meadows, and roads of the island; but within the great house was an animated twofold life, for the whole sacred narrative was here rehearsed afresh in the minds and before the eyes of the children. Every day were recalled those nightly events, so touching and blessed, that took place in Canaan nearly two thousand years ago. Manna lived so entirely in these representations, that she often had to stop and force herself to think where she was. She was seized with a longing to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, to kiss the soil of the Holy Land, and there atone for all the evil done by those who were near to her, and those who were strangers to her.

Her eyes beamed as with a fire from above, while with wonderful power she repeated the sacred history to little Heimchen, who was again sick in bed. But the little girl made her smile to-day by asking: —

"Is there snow in Jerusalem too, then?"

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Manna had scarcely considered what season of the year it was, so entirely was she absorbed in the life she was describing. As she turned to look at the melting snow, a lay-sister entered and handed her a letter.

"Where is the messenger?" she asked.

"He is waiting in the reception-room."

"I will give him an answer," returned Manna, and began to read her letter a second time.

She paced the cell backwards and forwards; at one moment she wanted to seek the Lady Superior and ask what she should do, but the next, her heart shrank at the thought. Why ask advice of another human being? She looked at her hand, which had been pressed upon her eyes. You cannot weep, said a voice within her; you must not weep for aught in this world.

"What is the matter?" cried Heimchen from the bed. "What makes you look so cross?"

"I am not cross, I am not cross; do you think I am?"

"No; now you look pleasant again. Stay with me, Manna — stay with me; don't go away — stay with me, Manna. Manna, I shall die."

Manna bent over the child and soothed her. This is the first trial, she thought, and it is a hard one. Now I must show whether love of mankind, of the Saviour, is stronger in me than family affection. I ought, I must! She committed Heimchen to the care of a lay-sister, and, promising soon to return, descended to the church. At sight of the picture, which made her think involuntarily of the man who was with Roland, she covered her face with her hands, threw herself in deep contrition upon her knees, and prayed fervently. Thus she lay long, her face buried in her hands. At length her decision was made, and she rose. I ought and must, and I can! I must have strength for it! I am resolved to live only for the service of the Eternal. Roland has good care taken of him; he recognizes no one; if I go to him it will be to remove my own distress, not his. Here, on the other hand, is Heimchen sick and needing me. There is no question as to my duty; I will stay at the post where not my will, but that of the Highest, has placed me.

She remembered the Lady Superior telling her how her father and mother had died, and she could not leave her convent to go to them. Manna resolved to do the same thing voluntarily, under the compulsion of no vow. She trembled as she thought that it might be better for Roland if he could die now before he fell into sin, and perhaps had to hear the dreadful secret. The idea was almost more than she could bear, but she held her resolution fast.

Manna returned to her cell, meaning to write and tell all that was in her soul, but she could not. She descended to the reception-room, told Lootz simply that she could not go back with him; and then, returning again to her cell, looked out upon the landscape. Life seemed frozen within her, but as the melting snow dripped from the roof, so her tears broke forth at last, and she wept bitterly; yet her decision remained unshaken. The whole night was spent in watching and prayer, and the next morning she told her story to the Lady Superior, who made no answer besides a silent inclination of the head.

Again in her cell, Manna read the letter, and was made aware for the first time that Eric's mother was nursing Roland. The paper trembled in her hand, as she read of Roland's constant talking with her in his fevered ravings. Why did her father write nothing of Pranken? Where was he? she asked herself; then, indignant that her thoughts should still cling to the world, with a sudden resolve she flung the letter into the open grate, and watched it break into momentary flame, and then float in light flakes up the chimney. So had it been in her heart, so ought it to be; nothing more from the outer world should reach her.

CHAPTER IX.

GROWTH DURING ILLNESS.

"He is saved!" said the doctor, and "He is saved," was repeated by voice after voice through the whole city.

The doctor enjoined double care in guarding Roland from the least excitement of any kind, and when the boy complained of the horrible tedium of his sick-room, both Eric and the doctor laughingly reminded him that he had his good time in the first place, and that ennui was the first sure step towards recovery. Roland complained also of being kept hungry, and then added, his face seeming to grow fuller and fairer as he spoke:—

"Hiawatha voluntarily suffered hunger, and do you remember, Eric, my thinking then that man was the only creature that could voluntarily hunger? Now I must practice what I preached."

Roland showed himself particularly full of affection toward Eric's mother. He maintained that she was the only person he had recognized during his delirium, and that it had caused him the greatest distress not

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to be able to say so at the time, but the wrong words would keep coming from his mouth. Even the Mother did not stay with him long at a time.

He rejoiced to see lilies of the valley in his room, and remembered that he had dreamed of them.

"Was not Manna with me too? I was always seeing her black eyes."

Heimchen's illness, they told him, prevented her leaving the convent.

He wanted to see the photograph taken of him in his page's dress, and said to Eric:

"You were right, it will be a pleasant recollection to me by and by. Indeed the by and by is already here; it seems to me two years ago. Do give me a glass, for I must know how I look."

"Not now," returned Eric; "not for a week yet."

Roland was as obedient as a little child, and as grateful as an appreciative man. The second day, he begged Eric to let him relieve his mind by speaking out what was in it.

"If you will speak calmly I will hear you."

"Listen to me then, and warn me when I speak too excitedly. I was on the sea, and dolphins were playing about the ship, when suddenly there was nothing to be seen but black men's heads, and in the midst of them a pulpit swimming, in which stood Theodore Parker preaching with a mighty voice, louder than the roaring of the sea; and the pulpit kept swimming on and on with the ship——"

"You are speaking excitedly already," interposed Eric. Roland went on more quietly, in a low tone, but every word perfectly distinct:—

"Now comes the most beautiful part of all. I told you how as I lay in the forest that time when I was journeying after you — nearly a year ago now — there came a child with long, bright, wavy hair, and said, "This is the German forest;" and I gave her mayflowers, and she was taken up in a carriage and disappeared; you remember it all, don't you? But in my dream it was even more bright and beautiful. "This is the German forest," was sung by hundreds and hundreds of voices, just as it was at the musical festival, oh, so beautifully, so beautifully!"

"That will do," interrupted Eric; "you have told enough, and must be left alone awhile."

Eric told his mother of the strange fairy story, which that decisive journey had given rise to in Eric's mind — he had heard of it before from Claus — and mentioned as a singular circumstance, that this second revolution in the boy's nature resulting in his illness, should have recalled to him this story.

The Mother was of opinion that something similar to the story must actually have happened, but warned Eric not to refer to the subject again, for every recollection of past events retarded recovery and a return to a natural state of mind.

The first time Roland could stand up, they were all surprised to see how much he had grown during his illness. The down too, on his lip and chin, to his great delight, had increased perceptibly. When he saw, for the first time, the straw spread before the house, he said,—

"So the whole city has known of my illness, and I have every one to thank. That is the best of all. How many I owe gratitude to! Whoever shall come to me now, for the rest of my life will have a claim upon me."

Eric and his mother exchanged glances as Roland spoke, and then cast their eyes to the ground. Wonderful was the awakening to life displayed before them in this young soul.

"Did Eric tell you that I had seen Pranken? asked Roland.

"Yes. Now lie down to sleep."

"No," he cried; "one thing more!"

He called for his pocket-book, in which he had written the name of the groom whom he had suspected of robbing him on his night journey. Reproaching himself for having hitherto neglected to inquire about him, he charged Eric to find the man, who was now a soldier in his regiment here, and bring him to his room.

The soldier came, and received from Roland a sum of money very nearly as large as that in the purse at the time. Eric had no need to have given such strict injunctions to the man not to excite Roland by much talking, and vehement expressions of gratitude, for the soldier had no power to speak a word. He felt as if he were in fairy land, at being thus summoned into a great hotel, before a beautiful sick boy, and presented with such a sum of money; it was like being transported into another world.

Contented and happy, Roland lay in bed again. He begged his father, when next he came to his bedside, to give away all his clothes, for he would wear none of them again.

"Do you want to put on your uniform at once?" asked Sonnenkamp.

"No, not now; but I want to go home soon, as soon as we can, back to the villa; home, home!"

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Sonnenkamp promised all should be as he desired.

The Professorin soon fell in with some young people whom Roland's clothes just fitted, and he exclaimed with delight when, he heard it, —

"That is good; now my clothes will go about the streets until I am there again myself; I shall be represented sevenfold."

He desired his father to express his thanks to all the persons who had so kindly shown an interest in him, a duty which Sonnenkamp would readily have performed without this admonition. It afforded the best possible way, better than the most brilliant entertainment, of coming in contact with the aristocracy.

With his handsomest carriage and horses, Sonnenkamp drove through the whole city. His wife had refused all his entreaties that she would accompany him; but he succeeded in inducing the Professorin to be his companion. She, also, refused at first, but yielded to Roland's persuasions. It was the first request, as he said, that he had asked of her since his return to life, and she should and must gratify him by going with his father.

In proportion to the pain it cost the noble lady to make her reappearance before the world in such companionship, was the ease with which all doors flew open, as if by magic, wherever Lootz showed the cards of the Professorin and Sonnenkamp.

The lady herself was often unconscious that this was the effect of her presence; she only knew that she was tightening between herself and Sonnenkamp the bonds from which she would gladly be free, and, whenever she returned to the carriage, she begged him not to say so much about her motherly care of Roland. Sonnenkamp, who was looked upon as of quite secondary importance by the persons visited, skilfully contrived to make himself the central point of the conversation by praising the Professorin's nobleness of spirit, and enlarging upon his own great happiness in being allowed connection with such a family.

On this excursion Sonnenkamp tasted the best pleasure of which he was capable; for his highest pleasure was in hypocrisy, and in the luxury of its exercise, he forgot his deep-rooted indignation at the pride of the resident families, who were now obliged to receive him as an equal. Where he hitherto had been permitted only a few hasty and unmeaning words, he was now allowed comfortably to display his manifold experiences, around all of which a softening halo was cast by the genuine sentiment that served as their setting, the sentiment of fatherly affection. His manner, also, of confessing that he had not always thought as favorably as he should of human nature, but had been taught by the Dournays to honor true nobility of mind, won for him the reluctant interest of all. He laughed to himself, as he went down the steps, at the thought of persons saying, as he knew they would, "We really never knew the man before; he has a vast deal of character and great sensibility."

He treated with especial consideration the members of the committee upon orders, knowing himself, and having had particularly enjoined upon him by Pranken, the importance of gaining them over to his plan.

Thus had Roland's illness given a fresh impulse to the nobility project; and the Professorin had, against her will, co-operated to the same end.

Sonnenkamp could not do enough to testify his respect for the lady who, after all, had gained him his greatest triumph. In spite of her refusal to come to his fete, and help in furthering his plan, she had now become his tool. He never grew tired of rejoicing in the conviction that all mankind could be used like puppets; some were to be bought by the ringing of gold, and some by the ringing of their own praises.

CHAPTER X.

DECORATION WITH THREE EXCLAMATION MARKS.

An audience had been requested of the Princess, that the Sonnenkamp family might present their thanks. The answer returned was that the Frau Professorin would be welcome, thus refusing to admit Sonnenkamp.

He next desired that Roland should write a letter of thanks to the Princess for the Professorin to hand to her, but several rough drafts, which his son wrote out, he so roughly discarded, that the poor boy was thrown into a state of feverish excitement which threatened to bring on a relapse. He was quieted by the interposition of the Professorin, who promised to deliver by word of mouth all that he had to say; but this scene put a violent end to the childlike affectionateness which had sprung up in him since his illness.

While the Professorin was at the palace, Sonnenkamp promenaded the palace garden, where he could keep in sight the carriage and servants, determined to hear at once what should be said of him there. This was the most painful experience that the

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Professorin had yet had to undergo. She was obliged to acquiesce in the Princess' praises of Sonnenkamp's generous nature, his extensive charities, and his noble magnanimity, of which the Cabinetsräthin, lady of honor to the queen, had given a full report, and nothing was left the Professorin but to listen, without the power to speak a word of contradiction. It was a fresh proof to her of the false position in which she was placed, and the dishonest game to which she had been made to lend a hand; first in the convent, and now at court. Yet she dared not raise her voice against this noble reputation of Sonnenkamp's, for in what light would she herself appear if she should confess what she knew?

When she was re-entering the carriage, after her audience from the Princess, a voice which cried "Stop!" made her tremble from head to foot. Sonnenkamp seated himself beside her, and required her to tell him instantly what the Princess had said. His delight at her report made him so far forget himself as to exclaim aloud, —

"Roland's illness has been a blessing to us all, — by giving us the right to call the Frau Professorin our friend," he quickly added, by way of correction. Even that she had to accept in silence, and was further distressed by being obliged to repeat the Princess' words for the benefit of Pranken, who, with Clodwig, now joined them.

She felt herself hemmed in on every side, and excusing herself early, she withdrew, in the hope of finding again in solitude her true self.

Clodwig had come, as member of the Committee upon Orders, to announce confidentially to Sonnenkamp that an order had been decreed him. Pranken embraced him when they were again alone together, exclaiming, —

"That is the first step, the first sure step."

Sonnenkamp was greatly delighted, and begged Pranken to wait while he hurried to carry the good news to Frau Ceres.

"So that is for you," she said, complainingly; "what is there for me?"

He assured her that the title of nobility would certainly follow speedily.

"Oh, but it takes so long," she complained.

He confessed to some disappointment and vexation on his own part at the slowness and formality with which everything in the Old World was conducted, but recommended patience.

"It is a good thing, to be sure," replied Frau Ceres, "that you should have an order; every one in society will see now at once that you are not a servant."

Sonnenkamp smilingly shook his head, but avoided any long discussions with Frau Ceres.

A few days afterwards, carriage after carriage drew up before the door of the hotel, bringing congratulations. Sonnenkamp affected great modesty, but Roland did not disguise his pleasure and pride, and insisted that his father should never go out without his new decoration.

The following sentence, however, in Professor Crutius's paper added bitterness to their cup of joy: —

"(Market price of Honors). Herr Sonnenkamp, of Villa Eden, transplanted from Havana, has received, from the highest quarter, the cross of honor for his services, it is said, in the ennobling of horticulture, which includes the ennobling of the horticulturist. Nothing now is wanting in the garden of Eden but that genealogical tree, which flourishes so excellently in our favored land."

There were malicious persons enough ready to express to Sonnenkamp their indignation at this would-be witty sharpness, while they watched him with curiosity to see what face he would put upon the matter. He appeared quite indifferent, but inwardly resolved to buy over that most virtuous of moralists, called Public Opinion.

He went to the publishing office, was shown into the editor's room, and was received with the utmost politeness by Professor Crutius. He opened the conversation by saying that he knew very well how to take a joke, and that his life in America had familiarized him with publicity; which remarks Crutius saw no occasion for answering. With great condescension, Sonnenkamp proceeded to express his pleasure at finding the Professor in such an influential position; Crutius bowed his acknowledgments. A little gas jet was burning in the editor's room, at which Sonnenkamp asked permission to light his cigar, offering one at the same time to Crutius, who accepted with thanks.

"I remember," began Sonnenkamp, "a bold and striking remark which you made on the occasion of my having the honor of receiving a visit from you; you had the courage to say that America was approaching a monarchical form of government."

"I remember saying so," replied Crutius, "half in jest and half in earnest, and I threw out the remark not merely as starting a good subject of conversation, but because

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I was of opinion that the reluctance of the best men in America to take part in politics was a sign of approaching monarchy."

"And you are no longer of that opinion?" asked Sonnenkamp, as Crutius paused.

He knew that he was reported to be in league with the party who were aiming to form an empire in Mexico, and thence to extend the monarchical form of government over the New World. It was a harmless, in some respects, an honorable reputation to have, that of being an agent for establishing a monarchy in the Southern States of the Union. Crutius sat for some time in silence, eyeing the figure before him with a keen and smiling glance. At last he said: —

"I am no longer of that opinion. The indifference of the better classes in America has ceased, as is evident from the papers as well as from the public meetings. I have also seen some letters written to Herr Weidmann by his nephew Dr. Fritz, which plainly prove that a change for the better has taken place. All feel again their rights as citizens, and political and party strife is everywhere uppermost."

"Ah, Herr Weidmann," said Sonnenkamp; "I am told that that worthy gentleman has a share in your paper."

"I know no man; I know nothing but party."

"The true American principle. That is good!" exclaimed Sonnenkamp, and went on to express, in a friendly tone, the regret that all must feel at seeing the press here so far behind the high standard attained in other countries. For that reason he should be very willing, he said, if a man of the Professor's experience would establish a new journal, to come forward to its support with a considerable sum of money, as well as to communicate important items of intelligence from his private correspondence.

"The matter is worth considering," replied Crutius. He went to his strong box and opened it, evidently with the intention of returning to Sonnenkamp the money he had formerly received from him, but saying, almost in so many words, to himself: — No, not yet; you shall have a public receipt for it by and by, — he closed the box, and, resuming his seat opposite Sonnenkamp, began: —

"I have an apology to make to you; at the time I had the honor of visiting you at your villa, I took you to be the notorious Banfield."

He carefully watched the expression of his visitor's face as he spoke.

"Thank you for telling me so," replied Sonnenkamp, very tranquilly. "The only way to clear up such a misunderstanding is to tell it to a man's face. Unfortunately, I have been often confounded with that man, and once actually went to Virginia in order to become personally acquainted with this double of mine; but he died just as I arrived there."

"Indeed! I had not heard of his death, and am somewhat surprised that Herr Weidmann's nephew, who was at open war with Banfield, should not have informed me of it. But it is astonishing what a strong resemblance there is between yourself and him. Of course I shall not mention the circumstance in my obituary of Banfield."

"As far as I myself am concerned," said Sonnenkamp, smiling, "it would make no difference; but you know the delight which the European aristocracy takes in any American scandal, and such a connection of names might to my wife and children be — well, might be very disagreeable."

Crutius protested that all personalities were wholly indifferent to him; he dealt only with principles, a sentiment which Sonnenkamp entirely approved and considered one of the advantages of European culture.

Crutius accompanied Herr Sonnenkamp with great politeness, through the outer offices as far as the head of the staircase; but the air of the room seemed to oppress him when he returned to it, and he threw open the windows.

"It is he, nevertheless," he said to himself. "Take care, Knight of the Cross of Honor, I have hold of you by another ribbon, and am only granting you a little longer time to flutter about me."

He hunted up the paper that contained the notice, made a broad red mark and three exclamation marks on the margin, and laid the sheet by in a special compartment labelled, "For future use."

CHAPTER XI.

A NEW LIFE IN EVERYTHING.

The Prince must have forgotten that he had meant to send for Sonnenkamp, who now found himself deprived of all opportunity of expressing his thanks in person to him or to his brother, by their departure, in company with many nobles of the court, and Pranken among them, for a royal hunting-seat where the great Spring hunts were to be held. Pranken had left the capital in great ill-humor at Herr Sonnenkamp's having been guilty of the impropriety of entering into any relations with the editor of a newspaper.

All was quiet in the Hotel Victoria. Eric's mother and aunt had already returned to the green cottage, and Roland

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begged and entreated every day that the whole family might break up their establishment in the Capital. At last his wish was granted, and Sonnenkamp favored his house, his servants, the park and the hot-houses, with a sight of the glory of his button-hole. This decoration he brought back, and could always preserve as a happy memento of that winter of pleasure and of pain. Roland never grow weary of greeting the familiar objects with fresh delight. A feeling and love of home seemed to be roused in him, for the first time, in its full intensity.

"I see now," he said to Eric, "that this living in hotels and anywhere else than in one's own house is like living on a railway. I can go to sleep, but I hear all the time the rattle of wheels in my dreams. That is the way when we are abroad, but now we are at home again, and I have a grandmother near by to visit, and an aunt, and the Major is a kind of uncle, and Claus is like a faithful old tower. The dogs too are glad to have me at home again. Nora looked at me a little strange at first, but soon recognized me, and her pups are splendid. Now we will be busy and merry again. It would be nice to plant a tree to remember this day by, and have you plant one near it, don't you think so? Don't you feel as I do, that you have just come into the world, and that all that has happened before was only a dream? If I could only erect something that should always be saying to me: Remember how happy you once were, and how happy you are, and let nothing further trouble you in the world. Oh, how beautiful it is here! The Rhine is broader than I remembered it, and the mountains look down so upon me! I think I saw them in my fever, but not so beautiful as they are now. It seems as if I could compel the vineyards to grow green at once."

As he was walking with Eric along the river bank, he suddenly stood still and said, —

"Hark, how the waves plash against the shore! Just so have they rippled and plashed day and night when I was not here. Would it not be beautiful to plunge into the waves and swim? Does not the rippling tempt you too? It seems to me we did it centuries ago."

The boy had awaked to new life, and thoughts and feelings came bubbling ceaselessly from his heart, as from an ever running fountain. He delighted in having the people he met tell him how tall he had grown, and how like a man he was looking.

Eric listened patiently to all his outpourings; the boy was tasting the double pleasure of returning health and the opening spring.

"The hen cackles for herself and the cock," he exclaimed, the first time he heard a hen; "and I am sure it is as beautiful a sound to them, as the song of the nightingale is to us. Don't you think our barnyard hen makes a great deal more noise over the laying of an egg than her wild sisters? No female of all the wild birds of the forest sings; the hen is the only one. Do look at the grass; how beautifully green it is, and the hedgerows there! The green leaves and buds would like to pop out all of a sudden and cry, Here we are!"

So he chattered on, like a grateful child.

Only a little at a time could the studies be resumed. Eric observed a certain depression in his mother, which might be the result of her anxiety for Roland, whose illness naturally recalled to her that of her own son, or of her constant care for the poor in the neighborhood, whose calls for help were increasing as their winter stores were getting exhausted. Roland was desirous of sharing these cares with her, and of being allowed to take some of the gifts himself; but the mother would not permit it. He was not ready for that yet, she said; he must first come to be a strong man himself, able to carry out his own great life-work.

Roland complained that he did not see the need of so many having to suffer want, when there was enough in the world to satisfy everybody. Eric and his mother had to reason with him, or he would have cursed wealth as a misfortune and an injustice. But the elasticity of youth came to their aid, and the boy soon forgot how much misery there was in the world, and contented himself with the objects immediately about him.

Sonnenkamp was very happy, too, for Eric and Roland took an active interest in the cultivation of the trees, and he could be their teacher.

"You will experience, as I have," he often said, "that the greatest pleasure in the world, is to watch the growth of a tree of your own planting."

The buds were swelling in the garden, while across the river, and over the fields, floated an aromatic breath of spring, a fragrance as if the air had blown over vast, invisible beds of violets. Within the house was a cheerfulness that had never been known there before. Even Frau Ceres could not escape its influence, for Roland shed about him a constant atmosphere of joy, that infected all who came in contact with him. He had, moreover, now, as he

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confided to the Professorin, a project in his head, of which he would not betray, even to her, the exact nature. On the anniversary of his birthday, which was also that of Eric's arrival, he meant to prepare for everybody such a joyful surprise as they never would guess.

The grass and the blossoms had come forth in the garden, the birds were singing, and the boats sailing merrily up and down the river, when, on the day preceding Roland's birthday, a note was found in his room, saying that the family must not be uneasy about him, for he would return the next day, bringing something most beautiful with him.

Upon inquiry, it appeared that Roland had set off with Lootz for the convent.

CHAPTER XII.

ORESTES AND IPHIGENIA.

Two steamers, one bound for the valley, the other for the mountains, were standing in the stream at a little distance from the island. In the one bound for the valley was Roland. In answer to his impatient question why they did not land, the captain silently pointed to the island, where a procession of priests and nuns were following a bier covered with flowers, and borne by girls dressed in white. The voices of children, as they sang, rose on the clear Spring air. Roland's heart trembled; what if his sister ——?

"It must be a little child," said an elderly man standing near him; "the bier is so small; those young girls could not carry it otherwise."

Roland breathed more freely; he knew his sister must be among the mourners.

He had landed, and was standing on the bank beside the boatman, who was to row him over to the island. The man shook his head and said softly:—

"Not yet, not yet; but perhaps you are a relation of the child?"

"What child?"

"A little child has died in the convent; oh, such a beautiful child! it made one happy only to look at her. The Lord God will have to make but little change to turn her into an angel."

"How old was she?"

"Seven, or eight at the most. Hark, there they come!"

The bells rang out into the Spring air, the smoke of the incense ascended, as the procession moved along the shore.

The boatman took off his hat, and prayed with folded hands. Roland, too, stood with uncovered head, and with a sudden shock he thought: Thus might I have been borne to the grave. Such a weakness came over him that he was obliged to sit down; he kept his eyes fixed upon the island; the procession went on, then disappeared, and all was still.

Now they were sinking the young body in the ground; the birds sang, no breath of air stirred, a steamboat came towards the mountain; all was like the figures in a dream.

The procession came in sight again, singing, and vanished through the open doors of the convent.

"So," said the boatman, putting on his hat, "now I will row you across."

But Roland, unwilling to surprise his sister before she had had time to rest and compose herself, asked to be allowed to remain a while longer on the shore. It was well he did, for no one in the convent so felt a part of her very self taken from her, as Manna. Dear little Heimchen had held out for a whole year, seeming to grow more cheerful, and making good progress in her studies, but in the Spring she faded, like a tenderly nurtured flower too early exposed to the cold.

Devotedly, day and night, Manna nursed the child, who with her was always happy. A foretaste of heaven seemed granted little Heimchen; she looked forward to it as to a Christmas holiday, and often said to Manna that she should tell God, and all the angels in heaven, about her. The next moment she would beg Manna to tell her about Roland.

"I saw him running with his bow and arrows, and oh, he was so beautiful!"

Then Manna told about Roland, and could always make Heimchen laugh by describing how his little pups tumbled one another over and over. The physician, and the hospital nun, who was almost a doctor herself, urged Manna to take more rest, but she was strong, and never left her post. In Manna's arms the child died, and her last words were:—

"Good-morning, Manna, it is no longer night now."

Manna's experience had been manifold. She had seen a novice assume the dress of the order, and had seen a fellow pupil enter her novitiate; yet was it all only a strong, free, joyful self-sacrifice. Now she had witnessed the death of a child, a little human being, dropping softly and silently from the tree of life, as a blossom falls from the stem.

It was Manna who, at the lower end of the bier, had helped to bear the child to the grave, and thrown three handfuls of earth

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upon the coffin. She did not shed a tear until the priest described how the child had been called from the earth, as a father might summon his child from a play-ground where it was in danger, and keep it safe in his home; then she wept bitterly.

On leaving the cemetery, she went once more to Heimchen's empty bed, and there prayed God that she might enter into eternity as pure as that little child. Then she grew composed, feeling the time could not be far distant when, after a short return to the excitement of the world, the great Father of all would summon her away from this play-ground into his sheltering mansions. She seemed already to hear voices from the noisy world without, calling her once more to return to it. She must obey them, but made a firm resolve faithfully to return into this, her one, only home.

She descended to the island, and took her seat under the pine-tree where she had so often worked. There was the little bench on which Heimchen had sat close by her side, almost at her feet. Manna sat here long, trying to imagine the distractions which life could bring to her in this one year, but she did not succeed. Her thoughts would return to Heimchen, and she found herself trying to follow the young soul into the eternity of Heaven.

Suddenly she heard steps, and looking up saw before her a youth who was like Roland, only much taller, and more manly. She could not stir from her seat.

"Manna, Manna, come to me!" cried the boy.

She rose, and with a loud cry, brother and sister fell into one another's arms.

"Sit down by me," said Manna at last. They sat together upon the bench beneath the pine-tree, and Manna, pointing to the smaller bench, told of Heimchen, and of her often wanting to hear stories about Roland, and when she came to tell how the child had died of homesickness, she suddenly exclaimed:—

"Our whole life, Roland, is nothing but homesickness for our heavenly home; of that we die, and happy is he who dies of it."

Roland perceived that his sister was in a state of overwrought excitement, amounting almost to ecstasy; and speaking in a tone of quiet and manly decision, he told her that she must first come back to her earthly home. He told her of his having acted in a play, and having been photographed in his page's silk dress; of the order his father had received; and, finally, of a secret his father had confided to him, and which he could not tell.

"Our father told you a secret?" asked Manna, her face growing rigid.

"Yes, and a beautiful, noble one; you will rejoice with me when you hear it."

Manna's features relaxed.

Roland told her how he had fancied himself with her all through his delirium, and that she ought to feel only happy at his being still alive.

"Yes, you are still alive," cried Manna, "you shall live. All is yours."

He reminded her that to-morrow was his birthday, and that his own wish was that she would let him take her to their parents on that day.

"Yes, I will go with you," cried Manna, "and it is better we should go directly."

Hand in hand, the brother and sister went to the convent, where Manna told the Superior of her intention to go home with Roland. In a state of feverish excitement, she then hurried to bid good-bye to all her fellow pupils, and all the nuns, went into the church and prayed, and finally made Roland go with her to Heimchen's grave.

Roland observed a long, straight row of gravestones without inscriptions, and, on asking Manna about them, was told they marked the graves of the nuns.

"That is hard," said Roland, "to have to be nameless after death."

"It is but natural," returned Manna; "whoever takes the veil lays aside her family name and assumes a sacred one, which is hers until her death, and then another bears it."

"I understand," said Roland. "That is giving up a great deal. The name of the nun cannot be written on the gravestone, nor the family name either; yet there must be a great many of noble family buried here."

"Yes, indeed; almost all were noble."

"What should you say if we should be noble too?"

"Roland, what do you mean?" cried Manna, seizing him violently by the arm. "Can you speak of such a thing here and now? Come away; such thoughts are a desecration to the graves."

She led him out of the little burial-place, and as far as the gravel path, when, suddenly leaving, him she turned once more to the cemetery and knelt down by the grave; then she rejoined her brother.

Lootz was standing with the luggage ready; Manna stepped into the boat with Roland, and the brother and sister were borne up the stream toward their home. All in the boat gazed with a pleased curiosity at

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the pair, who, however, sat quietly hand in hand, looking out upon the broad landscape.

"Tell me," urged Roland, "why you said, when you were going to that convent, that you, too, were an Iphigenia?"

"I cannot tell you."

"Oh yes, you can; I know all about her. I have read the Iphigenia of Euripides, and of Goethe, too, by myself and with Eric, and you are like neither of them."

"It was only —— ah, let us forget all about it."

"Do you know," cried Roland, "that Iphigenia became the wife of the great hero Achilles and lived with him, on the island of Leuce, in eternal blessedness?"

Manna confessed her ignorance, and Roland described the copy of the Pompeian fresco that Eric's mother had showed him, where Calchas, the priest, is holding the knife, Diomedes and Odysseus are bearing Iphigenia to the altar, and, her father, Agamennon, hides his face, while, at the command of Artemis, one of the nymphs leads in the stag that is to be sacrificed in Iphigenia's place.

"How many things you have learned," smiled Manna.

"And Eric told me," continued Roland, "that the sacrifice of Iphigenia was just like that of Isaac, and all the other sacrifices we read about."

Manna's face darkened; that was the foundation of a fatal heresy.

"Stop, now I have it," cried Roland. "Ah, that is good! There are still oracles in the world. Orestes had to fetch his sister from the temple of Tauris, where she was priestess. That is it! You divined it! That will delight Eric; ah! how it will delight him! But stay! When Iphigenia and her brother were on board ship I am sure he must have played off all sorts of silly tricks to amuse her, and I am sure she laughed. Have you quite forgotten how to laugh? You used to laugh so merrily, just like a wood-pigeon. Do laugh just once."

He laughed with his whole heart, but Manna remained unmoved, and, during the way, sat buried in her own thoughts. Only once, when the boat came to a sudden stop in the middle of the stream, she asked: —

"What is that?"

"That is the very question I asked Eric when we were going up the river together, and he showed me up there a heavily-laden freight vessel, which would be overturned and sunk by the commotion of the water, if our steamer did not moderate its speed. Oh, there is nothing he does not know, and then he said: Remember, Roland, that we should do the same thing in life; we must not rush on our own way, but must think of the heavily-laden voyagers on the stream of life with us, and take care that the waves we raise do not overwhelm them."

Manna stared at her brother. She could trace the influence of a man who used the actual as a symbol of the ideal, and she became herself, in a measure, conscious of that power which in every outward aspect of life seeks and finds the underlying thought. She shook her head, and opening her breviary, began diligently to read it.

"See the sunlight on the glass cupola," cried Roland, as it grew late in the afternoon. "That is home. Perhaps they have guessed at home that you are coming back with me."

"Home, home," breathed Manna softly to herself; the word sounded strange to her on her own lips, as it had done from Roland's. She closed her eyes, as if dazzled by the reflection on the glass cupola.

CHAPTER XIII.

NOTHING BUT EYES.

Two carriages were waiting at the landing. Manna received the embraces and kisses of her father without returning them, and watched, in apparent terror, the receding steamer, which, after quickly landing its passengers, went swiftly on its way.

"Your mother is in the carriage," said Sonnenkamp, offering Manna his arm. She laid her hand timidly upon it, allowed herself to be led to the glass carriage, in which sat Frau Ceres and Fräulein Perini, and, taking her seat beside her mother, embraced her passionately.

Sonnenkamp and Roland entered the other carriage, and all drove toward the villa. The father muttered something to himself about not having heard the sound of his daughter's voice.

"Where is Eric?" asked Roland.

"In the green cottage with his mother. It was considerate on the part of a stranger to retire to his own relations at such a time, and leave the family alone."

Roland was struck by the words. Were Eric and his family strangers?

On arriving at the villa, Fräulein Perini also withdrew hastily, and went to the Priest's house, whence a messenger was soon despatched to the telegraph station.

The parents were alone with their children, but there seemed a chill in the room which banished all feeling of quiet and comfort.

Sonnenkamp and Roland took Manna to her room, where she was pleased to find

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everything in its old place, and, at sight of the open fire-place filled with beautiful growing plants, turned to her father and thanked him, offering him her hand for the first time, and kissing his; but she could not repress a shudder at touching the ring on his thumb.

When Roland was left alone with his sister, he urged her to visit his grandmother and aunt that very day; but Manna reproved him for giving such names to persons not really related to him.

"Ah, but you must love them too," said Roland.

"Must? One can love nobody upon compulsion. Let me tell you, Roland — but no; there is no need."

She yielded at last to his persuasions, and went with him through the new gateway in the garden wall, along the meadows by the shore.

"There goes Eric; I will call him. Eric! Eric!" cried Roland in a loud voice.

The figure did not turn, however, but kept on, and presently disappeared among the shrubbery.

Roland and Manna found the Professorin waiting for them upon the steps, and Manna received a hearty welcome.

"He gave me no peace till I consented to come to you," said Manna.

"So he makes you mind like the rest of us, does he?" said the lady with mock severity. "Let me tell you, my dear child, that I know this wild boy has said a great deal to you about me, and would like to force you to love me; but even the best intentioned urgency in such matters should be avoided. Glad as I shall be if we can be good friends, we yet will not be forced upon each other."

Manna looked in amazement on the Mother, who asked a great many questions about the convent, and advised her to remain much alone, as the sudden change from a life of seclusion to one of excitement might injure her habits of thought, as well as her health.

Manna felt herself cheered by intercourse with this quiet, composed, harmonious nature; only the room looked strange to her with no images of saints about. Her attention was attracted by the sewing-machine, and the Mother had readily consented to instruct her in the use of it when Aunt Claudine entered, whose dignified bearing interested Manna even more than the Mother had done.

"You and Aunt Claudine," exclaimed Roland, "have two things in common. She is a star gazer like you, and plays the harp as you do."

Aunt Claudine did not require much urging, but willingly played Manna a piece on the harp.

"I shall be very grateful if you will accept me as a pupil," said Manna offering her hand; and the beautiful nervous hand which grasped hers gave her more pleasure by its touch, than she had found in the soft little plump one of the Professorin.

When it grew evening, the Mother and Aunt set out with Roland and Manna towards the villa, Manna walking with the Aunt, and Roland with the Professorin. On the way Eric met them.

"At last!" cried Roland. "Now, Manna, here he is; here you have him."

Manna and Eric exchanged formal bows.

"Why don't you speak? Have you both lost your tongue? Eric, this is my sister Manna; Manna, this is my friend, my brother, my Eric."

"Don't be excited, Roland," said Eric, and there was a ringing tone in his voice that made Manna involuntarily raise her eyes to him. "Yes, Fräulein, this is the second time I have met you in the twilight."

Manna almost began to say that she had seen him once in broad daylight, when she had not spoken to him, but had heard inspiring notes from him; but she checked herself and pressed her lips together. Roland broke the pause that ensued, by saying urgently: —

"Come into the house; then you will see one another by lamplight. It is just a year ago, this hour, since I ran away; can it be only a year? Ah, Manna, you cannot imagine how many hundred years I have lived through in this one. I am as old as the hills, as old as that laughing sprite the groom told me about."

He repeated the story to his two willing listeners. When he had ended, Eric announced his intention of staying till the next day with his mother, for every one who was not a blood relation was a stranger at such a time as this. Roland would hear nothing of his being a stranger, but Manna's eyes as they gleamed in the darkness seemed to grow larger.

At the new gateway the party divided, Roland and his sister going to the villa, and Eric returning to the green cottage with his mother and aunt. For the second time he had seen Manna, and for the second time she had seemed nothing but eyes.

How strange that this man should look like the picture of Saint Anthony, thought Manna, when she was alone in her room; there seemed to me no point of resemblance between them; some passing look of his,

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an expression of his eyes, must have reminded Roland of the picture; she too had seen nothing of Eric but his tall figure and his eyes.

She knelt long in prayer, and as she took off her clothes afterwards, she drew more tightly round her waist a girdle — only a little cord it was, which one of the nuns had given her — so tightly that it cut into her flesh.

CHAPTER XIV.

A MORNING GIFT.

Before daylight Roland was at Eric's bedside, and waked him, saying: —

"I will go with you to-day."

Eric could not think what the boy meant, till he reminded him of his having said that he ought, at least once every year, to go up on some hill and see the sun rise. Eric remembered saying so, and, hastily putting on his clothes, they walked together up a neighboring eminence. A year ago that morning, Roland said he had for the first time seen the sun rise; then he was alone, now with a friend.

"Let us keep silent," advised Eric. They looked towards the east, and saw the light gradually appear. A new light dawned in Roland's mind; he saw that all the splendor and glory of the world is nothing, compared with the light which belongs alike to all. The richest can make for himself nothing higher than the sunlight, which shines for the poorest in his hovel; the fairest and the highest belongs to all mankind.

Roland fell into a sort of ecstasy, and Eric with difficulty refrained from pressing him to his heart. He was happy, for the sun had risen in Roland, the sun of thought which can never set; clouds may obscure it, but it stands and shines for ever.

The two descended to the river, and bathed joyfully in it under the early light, and to each the water was as a new baptism. The bells were ringing as they returned to the villa, and in the distance they saw Manna going to church.

Herr Sonnenkamp also had risen early, and paid a morning visit to the Professorin.

"I have followed your good advice," he said, "and made Roland no present to-day. Your account of the way in which royal children keep their birthday was charming; they are not to receive, but to give. I have followed your suggestions in every particular, and given Roland nothing but the means and opportunity of bestowing upon others; I owe you double thanks for allowing me to take the entire credit of the idea. Any approach to untruthfulness is distasteful to me, but for my son's sake, I venture to practice a little deception to-day."

The lady pressed her lips together. Here was this man, whose whole life was a lie, trying to pass himself off for a man of truth! But she had already taught herself not to be always inquiring too closely into the motives of good deeds. She asked about the presents that Roland was to distribute, and finally yielded to Sonnenkamp's desire that she should accompany him to the villa.

As they approached the door, a carriage drove up from which jumped Pranken. He had come, he said, because it was Roland's birthday, and expressed great pleasure at hearing that Manna also had arrived: Fräulein Perini's telegram he thought it needless to mention. As he stood upon the terrace overlooking the Rhine, he saw Manna walking up and down the terrace with a little book in her hand, and could perceive the motion of her lips as she repeated the words from it.

Fräulein Perini soon appeared, and exchanged a few whispered words with Pranken. Great was her pride at having frustrated the cunningly woven plans of this Professor's family, which so plumed itself on its lofty sense of honor. There was no doubt in her mind that the idea of bringing Manna from the convent had originated with Eric, and she saw further evidence of his plotting, in the girl's having been taken to the green cottage on the very evening of her arrival, and returning delighted with the whole family, especially with Aunt Claudine. With a knowing look at Pranken, Fräulein Perini slyly remarked that the Aunt was kept as a reserve to be brought to bear upon Manna, but she hoped that Pranken and herself would be able to hold the field.

At last Manna herself came upon the terrace, and again offered her left hand to Pranken, as in the right she held her prayer-book. She thanked him cordially for his congratulations that this beautiful spring morning found no blossom wanting on the family tree, and, as he undertook to read what was in her mind, and interpret her feelings at finding herself once more under her father's roof, she said quietly: —

"It is a tent which is spread and folded again."

With great tact Pranken seized upon the expression; he was sufficiently familiar with the ecclesiastical manner of speaking, to be able to construct the whole contingent of meditation and reflection, from which this single remark had been thrown like a solitary soldier on a reconnoissance. He talked with no little eloquence of our pilgrimage

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through the desert of life, until we reached the promised land, adding that the old man in us must die, for only the new man was worthy to possess the land of promise.

There was a certain conversational fluency in Pranken's manner of speaking which at first repelled Manna, but she seemed pleased, upon the whole, to find this carefully trained, versatile man at home in this sphere of thought. The fact of his belonging to the church, and therefore living among the same ideas with herself, seemed to form a bond of attraction between them. When at length he drew out of his pocket the Thomas à Kempis she had given him, and told her that to that he owed whatever of good was in him, she cast down her eyes, and, laying her hand upon the book, said hurriedly, as she heard the voices of the Professorin and the Major approaching: "Pray put the book back, away."

Pranken obeyed, and while his eyes were fixed upon Manna, kept his hand pressed on the book, which lay against his heart. This common secret established a degree of intimacy at once between himself and the pure, reserved girl.

The Major examined Manna as he would have done a recruit, making her turn round and round, and walk this way and that, that he might judge of her way of moving, all which evolutions Manna went through with great good humor.

"Yes, yes," he said at length, extending the forefinger of his left hand, as he always did when about to bring forth a piece of wisdom; "yes, yes; when it works well, it is all right. Yes, yes; Herr Sonnenkamp, when it works well, it is right, this sending a young man into the army and a young woman into a convent, for a while. When it works well, it is all right."

All nodded assent, and the Major was enchanted at having begun the day by saying a good thing. But he soon changed his tone to one of complaint at Roland's absence; he did not deserve his happiness, keeping out of the way on such an anniversary as this, such a beautiful spring day, too, that if they had ordered it expressly it could not have been finer. He was just about to relate the fearful adventure in the special train, which took place just a year ago that very day, when Roland and Eric at last appeared.

Manna embraced her brother affectionately, as did Pranken also, but Roland quickly disengaged himself from the latter's grasp, and said to Manna: —

"Shake hands with Herr Eric too, for this is his birthday amongst us. A year ago to-day he became mine, or I his; did you not, Eric? Give him your hand."

Manna offered Eric her hand, and for the first time the two looked one another full in the face, in the broad daylight.

"Thank you for the kindness you have shown my brother," said Manna.

Eric was much struck by Manna's appearance; she seemed to him a wonderful mixture of gentle melancholy and lofty pride; her features expressed a cold indifference; her motions were full of grace; there was a bewitching softness in her voice, but mingled with a tone of sadness.

Without knowing or wishing it, Manna became the central point of attraction; even on this fete-day of Roland's, all seemed to turn to her.

Presently the party adjourned to the great hall, where were Eric's mother and aunt, Fräulein Perini and Frau Ceres. Frau Ceres had such fear of the morning air that all the windows were tight shut. She was yawning when Roland entered, but embraced and kissed him. The Professorin also embraced him, saying: —

"I wish you happiness; that is, I wish for you a constantly growing appreciation of the happiness that has been granted you, and a knowledge how to use it."

Sonnenkamp shrugged his shoulders at these words, and said to Pranken, by whom he was standing: —

"How this woman is always trying to say something out of the common course! She has actually forgotten at last how to say a simple good-morning."

"Let us be thankful," rejoined Pranken, "that she has not yet remarked, — As my departed husband, Professor Mummy, used to say."

The two men spoke without any change of expression, so that no one heard or observed them.

Upon a great table lay a number of packages, each inscribed with a name. The Professorin, with Fräulein Milch, had made a list of the boys in the neighborhood of Roland's own age, who were to have presents given them on his birthday. They were mostly apprentices about to set out on their travels, laborers on the Rhine boats, or in the vineyards: some poor and needy persons had also been thought of, and for every one a suitable gift was provided. In the middle of the table lay a large envelope which Sonnenkamp had hastily placed there on his entrance, and on which was written: "For my friend and teacher, Captain Doctor Eric Dournay."

Roland's quick eye soon discovered the

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envelope, and he handed it to Eric, who, on opening it, found a package of banknotes to a considerable amount. His hand trembled; for a moment he looked about him, then replaced the bills in the envelope, and advancing to Sonnenkamp, who was standing by Manna and Pranken, and had just spoken some words in a low tone to the latter, held the envelope towards him, and, in a voice so agitated that he could scarcely enunciate a word, begged him to take back his gift.

"No, no; do not thank me; it is I who should thank you."

Eric's eyes were cast to the ground, but he raised them and said, —

"Excuse me, I have never in my life accepted any present, and am unwilling — "

"A man of independence like you," interrupted Pranken, "should waste no words on the matter. Take the gift as cordially as it was given."

He spoke as one of the family, almost as if he had presented the money himself. Eric stood abashed, not knowing how to refuse the gift without seeming ungrateful and over delicate. As his eyes fell upon Manna, a pang shot through his heart at the thought of having to appear before her, on this first morning, as a needy receiver of money. He looked at her as if imploring her to speak to him, but she kept silent; seeing no other course open for him, he drew back the hand which held the package, and soon after disappeared from the room.

Without, in the park, he walked thoughtfully to and fro for a while, then, sitting down on the bench where Bella had sat, opened the envelope and counted the money; it amounted to a sum large enough to support a moderate family. As he sat there dreaming and unconscious, holding the envelope between his two hands, and deaf to the song of the birds in the trees and shrubs about him, his name was suddenly called, and the servant Joseph handed him a letter from Professor Einsiedel, congratulating him upon the anniversary, and admonishing him to earn money enough to enable him to lead an independent life, wholly devoted to pure science. The Professor repeated his wish, that there might be some place of retreat established for the reception of men of science in their old age.

Greatly comforted, Eric returned to the company in the drawing-room, who had scarcely missed him.

"That is the way with these idealists, these reformers, these priests of humanity," said Pranken to Sonnenkamp. "See how the Doctor looks as if he had got wings! Yes, that is the way with them. They despise money, till they have it themselves."

Pranken had observed aright. Eric did in truth feel himself endowed with a new power, but also the thought arose in him: Now you too are rich, and can care for others besides yourself. Observing, presently, that he was keeping his hand upon the breast-pocket which contained the money, he drew it away as if it had been upon coals.

CHAPTER XV.

A FEAST WITH UNEXPECTED DISHES.

The Major and Roland set out upon the performance of a most pleasant office. They had the pony harnessed to the little wagon, in which all the packages were put, and drove through the hamlets, stopping at the various houses, and personally distributing the gifts. First of all they drove to Claus's, in whom the last winter had worked a great change. After the first expressions of sympathy had been received from his neighbors, and he had once washed down all thought and care with a good drink, he took to mitigating his troubles by the all-obliterating wine, or by brandy, if he could get no better. His wife and children were in despair at this change in him, and once the family came to hard words, the Cooper having heard that his father had been begging of a stranger from the other side of the mountains, and complaining of having been ruined by a rich man.

The Gauger and the Burgomaster were amused with Claus's complaints and fierce invectives, his jokes and wise sayings, and supplied him with liquor.

When Roland and the Major arrived at this man's house, it was evident, even at that early hour of the morning, that he had been drinking. Roland was much shocked, but the Major said, —

"Oh, you should not think anything of that. The man drinks too much, but only too much for his own stomach. Where is the harm? If a man is made happy by a glass of wine too much, do let him enjoy it."

The Major's words and Roland's inward happiness soon effaced all recollection of this first meeting. From Claus's they went to Sevenpiper's, where was rejoicing beyond measure.

Roland said, again and again, that this day was the happiest he had ever passed; and the Major impressed upon him that he must not throw his good deeds into the empty air, but accept the good wishes and blessings of those he had relieved from suffering and care.

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"Fräulein Milch," he added, "has a good saying, which should be inscribed in the temple: The happiest hour is that which follows the performance of a good deed. Write that in your heart, my boy."

The dogs jumped about the wagon, and Roland cried out to them, —

"Do you too know that this is my happiest day? You poor beasts, I can give you nothing but food; you want neither clothes nor money."

Out of one house Roland came flying, pale as death.

"What has happened to you?" asked the Major.

"Oh, let us get away from here, away!" urged the youth in terror. "I tremble all over, now, at what was done to me. If I had been attacked by robbers, I could not have been more frightened."

"But what was it? Tell me what it was!"

"The old man, whom I brought the clothes and money for, wanted to kiss my hand; that old man — my hand! I thought I should die, I was so frightened. And are you laughing at it?"

"I am not laughing; you were quite right."

The Major looked upon this sensitiveness as one of the results of the nervous fever, and said after a while, —

"Your father has planted a great many trees, and when one thrives he calls it a grateful tree. Do you know what the most grateful tree is? The tree of knowledge and good works."

While Roland's heart was thus swelling with the joy of health and well-doing, Eric was in great depression. He had given his mother Professor Einsiedel's letter, and, sitting beside her, told her how this had comforted him for a while, but that now he was again in a state of great uncertainty, because his relation to Sonnenkamp must henceforth be one of painful dependence; till now he had occupied a free and equal position with regard to him, but now he had received favors, received a gift of money, and had lost his independence.

His mother listened patiently to the end, and then asked, —

"Do you hesitate to accept this gift because it comes from Herr Sonnenkamp? Why not as readily or as reluctantly as from any-one else, from Clodwig, for instance?"

She put the question eagerly, thinking she perceived that Eric, as well as herself, was aware of Sonnenkamp's past life; but she was soon assured that he had no suspicion of it, by his replying, —

"Friendship gives differently, and makes it seem hardly a gift; from a friend like Clodwig, I could accept anything."

His mother told him he should consider that the money came from Roland, whose coming of age was only anticipated. But that idea troubled Eric too: it made him feel that he was sent away, paid off; the account was squared between them. His mother reminded him, for his consolation, that no outward pay could compensate for the labor, the burning cheek, the trembling nerves, the planning and thinking by day and by night, which the education of a human being requires. Finally, Eric confessed that it mortified him to have to accept presents before Pranken, and Manna too, the daughter of the house.

"Pranken and Manna are one," answered his mother, "she is his betrothed. But take comfort; look back over the past year, and you will see that you have developed in your pupil a character which nothing can undermine."

This thought finally enabled Eric to rise above all his depression, and when he left his mother's house he had spirit enough to exclaim:—

"Look at Eric, old Father Rhine; he is become an independent man, and can live upon his interest till he is seventy-seven years old!"

He met Roland and the Major returning from their round of visits. It was not for nothing that the Major carried always two watches about with him, one of which he called his *galloper* because it was always fast; the only difficulty was, he could never tell whether he had put the galloper in his right or left pocket; however, he was on hand again punctually at dinner-time.

Roland sat at the richly furnished table, but tasted scarcely a morsel.

"I am so full," he said to Eric, "so full of the great happiness I have given to-day. And you — are you not happy too?"

Eric could truly say he was.

There was some discussion as to who should propose the customary toast for Roland; whether it was for Eric or Pranken to do.

Both at length urged the duty upon the Major, who rose and said, —

"Gentlemen and ladies!"

"Bravo!" cried Pranken.

"Thank you," said the Major, "Interrupt me as often as you will; I have learned to take flying leaps, and every obstacle gives me a chance for a higher bound. Once more, ladies and gentlemen! the human race is divided into male and female."

General laughter, which delighted the Major.

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"Here you behold a pair in the garden of Eden —"

"Perhaps you would like this to complete your picture?" said Pranken, handing the Major an apple.

Roland was indignant with Pranken for interfering so often, and begged the Major not to let himself be confused by it.

"Be easy, my boy," said the Major in a low voice; "I can stand fire."

Then he continued aloud:—

"So we have here two children, the daughter of the house and the son of the house; and the children have us. They have their parents; they have a grandmother and an aunt by election, and here,"—giving himself a ringing blow on his chest,—"here they have an uncle. We love them as if they were our own blood, and they love us, do they not, children?"

"Yes!" cried Roland, and Manna nodded.

"So then, if I had a son — no, I don't mean that — if I had a teacher for this son of mine — no, I did not mean that either — So, then, our wild rover there — see, he has already a growth upon his face — may the Architect of the universe bless him, and let him grow to be a man who shall understand what is true happiness for himself, for others, for his brethren of all faiths, for all the descendants of man upon the earth."

Amen, he was about to say, but corrected himself, and cried: — "His health, again and again, his health.

The Major sat down, and unbuttoned several buttons behind his napkin.

Sonnenkamp spoke next, and in happily chosen language proposed a toast to Eric, his mother, and his aunt.

"You must speak too; you must speak too," the Major kept urging upon Eric.

Eric rose, and with a light and cheerful tone began:—

"Two things may be particularly noticed, which the Old World has given to the New World of America — the horse and wine. The horse is not a native of America, neither is wine. Germans first planted vineyards in the New World. Two natural objects, therefore, which enlarge the scope of human strength and intellect, we have presented to the New World. I leave out of consideration the kingdom of ideas. My toast is this: May our Roland, who comes to us from the New World, be borne onward and animated by the rich powers beyond himself, to great and noble ends!" He raised his glass with enthusiasm, the sunlight sparkled in the wine, and pointing to it he continued:

"The sun of to-day greets the sun of a past age. What we drink is the offspring of departed days, and what we receive into our soul has ripened in the sun of eternity. Each one of us should be a fruit that shall ripen and live on in the sun of eternity, as God lives in humanity, and in the stars, and in the trees and plants. Holy is the world, and holy should we make ourselves. We are not our own, and what we have is not our own. What we are and what we have belong to the Eternal. My Roland, the bright, smiling, sunny light of this day which is gilding the earth will be turned to the fire of the wine, which after resting and ripening in well sealed casks, in the cool earth, shall presently be carried to strangers through all the lands, to animate and penetrate them with its sunlight. So shall the sun of to-day become fire in our souls, which shall burn brightly through the cold and desolate days that may be in store. May that ripen in you, my Roland, which shall quicken your soul, and rejoice mankind, and convert all life into the free and beautiful temple of God."

Eric's eye encountered a glance from Manna's, as he sat down. She beheld him as it were for the first time. His face wore an expression of ideality, of spirituality, which seemed to subdue all passion, and a look of such manly decision as made her feel, If, in danger, I had this man by my side, I should have an all-sufficient help. But she needed no help.

Sonnenkamp and Pranken shrugged their shoulders at the conclusion of Eric's speech, and had to repress a laugh which was provoked by Sonnenkamp's whispering to his neighbor, —

"The man almost seems to believe what he says."

A diversion was here made by the arrival of the Doctor, and of the Justice's Lina, who was eager to greet her friend upon her "return to life," as she called it. All arose from the table in excellent spirits.

CHAPTER XVI.

ABOUT ANOTHER AND FOR ANOTHER.

The Doctor kept close watch upon the behavior of the girls, and listened to their conversation. Manna expressed her thanks for her friend's kind attention, but preserved all the while in her manner a certain reserve, an indescribable something, the result of that life in the convent which to Lina had been productive of nothing but an acquaintance with foreign languages.

The Doctor afterwards expressed to the Professorin, as they were walking back and forth together in the garden, great curiosity to know whether worldly wisdom would

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succeed in triumphing over the influence of the Church, and also his regret that she herself was not a Catholic, as in that case her task would be much easier. But the lady remained firm in her decision to exert no influence whatever on Manna; she was not only not required by her duty to do so, but would actually have no right, Manna being betrothed to Pranken.

"Who knows?" replied the Doctor, "who knows? The Huguenots not only went into exile themselves; their example made others emigrate: and often our influence is greatest when it is quite unintentional."

Sonnenkamp wished Lina to spend some of these Spring weeks with his daughter, and Manna had no alternative but to second the invitation. Lina accepted, on condition of obtaining her parents' consent, and returned with the Doctor to be sent for the next day.

Pranken, who remained through the evening, was rejoiced at Manna's confiding to him that she had already painfully experienced the world's temptation to want of truthfulness; for that, to speak with perfect candor, she did not desire a visit from Lina, and yet she had been obliged to request it; that she thought was the great sin of the world, that it makes us false to ourselves.

Pranken hoped that Lina's visit would have an enlivening effect upon Manna; to begin with, however, he wanted to find out how she liked the Professorin. In approaching the subject he so carefully worded his remarks that if Manna should speak with enthusiasm he could fall in with it, and the same if she expressed dislike.

Manna repressed the confession that rose to her lips, that she felt herself already bewildered by the confusion that prevailed in the house, and longed for the well-ordered quiet of the convent, and merely complained of feeling so unlike herself in the world. But, when Pranken thanked her for this confidence, she recoiled and said, scarce above her breath, that the world made people talkative even when they wished to be reserved.

"I am glad to hear you speak of reserve," resumed Pranken, after a pause; "for our Archbishop enjoined it upon me lately in those very words. 'Be reserved,' he said; 'persons who speak much and readily are at bottom nothing but dilettanti.'"

He thought Manna would perceive at once that he was referring to Eric, but, as she gave no sign of applying the charge of dilettantism to him, Pranken spoke more openly and said: —

"Do you not perceive something of the dilettante in the very talkative Herr Eric?"

Manna answered shortly: —

"The man talks much, but ——"

Here she made a long pause, and Pranken was in great suspense, wondering how she would finish her sentence.

"He talks much," she said, "but he thinks much too."

Pranken cast about for some turn he could give the conversation, which, with a skilful aim, could not fail to hit the mark. He might have spared himself his great pains, for a man whose activities extended over so much ground as Eric's offered many points of attack.

Pranken began by declaring Eric to be a kind of Don Quixote, a man who was always adventuring after great ideas, as in the case of the exaggerated sentiment of his toast. Disguising the cutting nature of his remarks under cover of gentle words, he attempted to turn Eric into ridicule. He thought it presumption in him, in the first place, to lay claim to any inward consecration as a cloak for his profanities, and finally went so far as to accuse him of passing off counterfeit coin, in the hope of deceiving a childlike, confiding mind. He looked keenly at Manna as he spoke, but she kept silence.

"Be on your guard," he added, "he plays the model man everywhere."

The expression seemed to please Pranken so well, that he ventured to repeat it.

"This playing the model man is very cunning, but we can see through it. You have no idea how much trouble this pattern of pedagogues, this Herr Dournay, has given us. You must be on your guard; his every word is stamped with the conviction, that he unites in his own person all possible examples of virtue."

Encouraged by a smile on Manna's face, which she tried in vain to suppress, Pranken continued: —

"After all, his eloquence is only that of the hairdresser, who talks of all kinds of things while he is curling your hair, only without setting up for so much scientific and religious aplomb. Observe how often he uses the word humanity; I counted it fourteen times, once, in a single hour. He affects great modesty, but his conceit actually exceeds all bounds."

Pranken laughed, knowing how easy it is to throw ridicule upon a man in the full tide of enthusiastic action; and with pleasure he perceived that his words were not without influence on Manna. If you can once set a

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man in a ridiculous light, there is no salvation for him. This, Pranken knew and hoped to accomplish in the present case; he, however, went on to say: —

"Our Roland has learned a great deal under this honorable gentleman, but he has had enough of him now; it is time he entered upon a wider sphere."

Manna preserved her thoughtful silence, and soon after walked away, occasionally, as she went towards the villa, nodding to herself as if assenting to what she had heard. Pranken looked after her in perplexity.

On the steps she met Eric, and both stopped. Eric felt obliged to say something, and therefore began, —

"I can imagine its being hard for you to have your first day at home a fete day; it will, perhaps, make the days that follow seem dull."

"How should you know what is passing in my thoughts?" replied Manna, as she went on up the steps.

She was indignant with the man for forgetting his position in the house, and taking upon himself to tell what was passing in her mind. What right had he to put into words what she did not choose to express? As she went up the steps, she pressed together in anger the lips which had spoken such cruel words; she was angry with herself too. But the words had been said, and could not be unsaid.

She spent the whole evening in her room. At a late hour Roland knocked at the door, and insisted on being admitted.

"Ah, sister," he said, as he sat down beside her, "of all I have been through to-day, one thing haunts me. Everybody to whom I gave a present said he would pray for me. How is that possible, and what good would it do? What good would it do to have another person pray for me, and say of me and wish for me before God all sorts of good things? Of what use would it be, if I were not in my own soul good and noble? No man can pray for another."

"Roland, what are you saying? What are you thinking of?" cried Manna, seizing him by both arms and shaking him; then, leaving the boy standing in amazement, she hurried into her chamber and threw herself upon her knees.

On this first day at home the ruin of her house was revealed to her. She prayed for Roland, that his mind might be enlightened and delivered from bondage, and even while she prayed, a feeling of strangeness stole over her. She wrung her hands, she groaned, she wept. Is it true that no one can stand in the place of another, can sacrifice himself for another? No, it is not, — it cannot be. She felt herself burdened, as by an actual weight from heaven, at the stirring of this great question, this great anxiety within her. Can a human being, then, do more harm than good to another? Is it so? Must it be so? There was a violent struggle in her soul; at last she smiled; a great conflict is appointed for me, she thought, and it is already beginning. She was to save the soul of her brother, and this, she told herself, could not be done by violence, but only by gentleness and humility.

She rose, and returning to the room where she had left Roland, held out her hand to him.

"I see," she said, "you are my grown-up brother; we must help one another to become better. We have much to give and to take from each other; that will come of itself."

She sat down quietly beside him, and held his hand tightly clasped in hers.

"How pleasant it must seem to you to be at home again!" exclaimed Roland. "The convent is no home for any one."

"For that very reason it is the best," returned Manna. "Every day, every hour reminds us that we have no home in this world; that our whole life is but a pilgrimage. If this world were our home, we should both have, you and I — no. You too tempt me to say what I should not."

"Eric is right," said Roland. "He says you are truly pious; what millions speak only with their lips, you utter from your heart."

"Did Eric say that?"

"Yes, and much more."

"But, Roland," interrupted Manna, "you should never tell what one person says of another."

"Not if it is good?"

"Not even then. We cannot tell on that very account — no," she interrupted herself; "are you not very happy in having so true a friend in Eric?"

"Indeed I am; and do you not like him better than Pranken?"

A smile rose to Manna's lips, but she repressed it and said, —

"Your teacher should also teach you never to make comparisons. But now, dear brother, remember that I have come from a convent, and need to be much alone. Good-night!" she added, kissing him.

"Remember," he called back to her as he departed, "that you must take your two dogs with you when you go to walk."

Manna was even yet not allowed to be

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alone. In the convent she had had no one to wait upon her, but here her father insisted on her having a maid to undress her.

The woman praised her beautiful black hair as she let it down.

"Ah; my Fräulein, you have what is so rare in these days, good, healthy hair. Would you believe, Fräulein, that almost all the hair we see on ladies' heads is false or padded? they wear a hat hidden under their hair."

And yet, thought Manna, this hair will fall. A sudden terror shot through her, as the maid passed her fingers through the loosened hair; she fancied that she already heard the clipping of the scissors.

At last Manna was alone. After devoting herself for some time to meditation and prayer, she began a letter to the Superior.

"We have celebrated to-day my birthday and my return to my parents' house; but I long for my own birthday, which shall be my entrance into the home of my Eternal Father—"

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THE COUNTRY-HOUSE ON THE RHINE.

PART III.

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BOOK X. — CHAPTER I.

THE GIANT'S TOY.

THE legend tells of that child-giant who took the ploughman, with plough and horse, to be a plaything, gathered them up in his apron, and carried them off.

This was the case with Manna. Her thoughts, by day and by night, had been so far removed from the world, so elevated, and so victorious over it, that all its doings seemed to her like children's plays. What is it all for? To pass away the time? Children succeed in that; they unconsciously persuade themselves that their dolls are alive; while children of a larger growth play with their dolls, but look upon them as shams.

Life is all idle play to them, and death alone is something serious.

It was with some such thought that Manna stood at the window, early on the morning after Roland's birthday; she saw nothing of the world, and yet she saw the whole world, far, far away.

So deeply impressed upon her memory were the tones of the convent-bell which had awakened the pupils at the first blush of dawn, that they had aroused her, this morning also, from her slumbers. She seemed to hear it ringing as she slept. It was some time before she realized where she was.

Thou art at home — where is thy home? who has built a house out of these stones, has made this bed?

In the villa all were still sleeping. Manna alone was awake, and with her the innumerable choirs of birds in the garden; and as the birds outside mingled together their twittering songs, so a thousand thoughts flitted through her mind.

She went into the park, and stood for a long time before the new gate that opened upon the path to the little green cottage. A voice within her seemed to say: Through this gate, and in this pathway, thou wilt have much to experience, much to struggle with, and much to overcome.

She wanted to find out, to image to herself what would enter there, but she succeeded no better than did Eric, as he gazed at the convent steps, in calling up before his mind's eye the various destinies of those who had passed in and out over that threshold.

Who would have been able to tell her that Eric had once gazed with the same feelings!

Manna had a feeling of unrest, as if she knew that an eye was watching her. Eric was now in fact standing at the window, and his glance rested upon her; but he took care to keep out of her sight. His soul too was moved, but by wholly different thoughts. While he was asleep, there was with him the abiding feeling that now he was possessed of ample means and was his own master; and this consciousness finally waked him. In the earliest dawn, he had again counted over the money which Sonnenkamp had handed him on the previous day. It was enough to support himself and his mother. He was so unaccustomed to money, that he felt impelled to count it several times over, and finally even to write down the amount. Then he smiled, saying to himself: —

It's well, and I am glad to be put to the test whether I can perform my duty in life with the same earnestness, poor or rich.

He opened the window and perceived Manna. He drew back softly, and wondered what were the feelings and thoughts of the child, who had come from the seclusion of the cloister into the luxurious parental home.

Sounds were now heard from the neighboring village, from all quarters, from both shores of the river, up and down the stream.

Manna left the park and turned back to the house in order to get her prayer-book. Fräulein Perini was waiting for her in the hall.

Manna heard Fräulein Perini give directions to the servants to make ready a room for the Justice's daughter, and she had it upon her lips to reproach herself to her former governess, for having been insincere in permitting Lina to be invited. She dreaded her visit; the superficial and childish character, as she had seen it the day before, seemed something new and strange. She had resolved to gain the victory by herself alone, and had come to the conclusion to ask Lina plainly not to make the visit at this time; she owed it to herself to remain alone, and to admit no distracting influence.

As she was going down the steps with Fräulein Perini, a letter was handed her, brought by a messenger, who was waiting for an answer. Lina wrote how much she regretted that she was not permitted to accept the hospitable invitation to Villa Eden. She besought Manna to send back a single word, containing the assurance that she was not angry with her.

Manna was glad that she could now reply without wounding the feelings of Lina, whose parents, she wrote, were in the right.

On reading over again her friend's letter, it seemed strange to Manna that no sort of

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excuse was assigned. Do all the neighbors still hold aloof from her parents' house?

Perhaps so! Another parental home, yonder, extends its invitation.

The church bell again rang, and Manna went with Fräulein Perini to church.

Fräulein Perini was elated and happy. Others might attempt to win Manna with every variety of influence; she alone could go with her to church.

"Do you still prefer to be silent in the morning?" asked Fräulein Perini quietly, extending her hand.

Manna nodded without speaking. Not another word was interchanged.

When the mass was over, and they had left the church together, Fräulein Perini said that she would like to introduce Manna to the Priest, who had been stationed here during her absence.

Manna begged to go alone. She lingered a while, without moving from the spot, and then went to the Priest's house. She seemed to be expected, for the Priest came out on the steps to meet her, and welcomed her with a benediction. He led her by the hand into his room, hastily removing his breakfast from the table, on which there was an open book.

Manna was directed to take a seat on the sofa. She began:—

"Fräulein Perini wished to introduce me to you, Reverend Sir. That might be necessary with a man; a stranger, but you are not a man, a stranger, you are a servant of our holy Church."

The Priest partially closed his eyes, brought together the ends of the fingers of his handsome hands, then drew them apart, and said in a quiet and clear tone:—

"The right way! You are in the right way, my child, keep in it. So it is! Worldlings come into a place, they are strangers, strangers as if they were among savages, and they are ignorant whether there is a single person who cherishes the same thoughts with them; and there are no two people who have the same thoughts, even when the words are the same, and they have no bond of unity; they are like the mote dancing here in the sunbeam. But you, if you should enter the remotest village, you would be at home. *There* is a house, and within it is a man who welcomes you as a spiritual brother, as a father. He is not there of himself, but has been placed there by another; and you have not come of yourself, but have been led by another. You are doubly welcome, my child, for perceiving and realizing this immediately. You knock at my door, and it is open to you; and it will be open whenever you may come. You knock at my heart, and that is open to you, be sure of that. I have no house of my own; my house belongs to him who shall come after me, and not to him either, and my heart is His who has made it beat."

The Priest stopped speaking, and fixed his regard upon Manna, who had closed her eyes, as if she could not bear the sunlight, could not gaze at the countenance on which the Spirit was now descending. The Priest could see how deeply she was moved; he placed his hand in a friendly way upon her head, saying:—

"Look up at me. I repeat to you, that you have come alone, and you know why you have come alone; this spares us the necessity of coming to an understanding, as worldlings term it. Coming to an understanding!"

The Priest laughed.

"Coming to an understanding! and they never do understand each other, they, the cultivated, as they call themselves, or the self-cultivating, as they ought to call themselves, for they believe that they can make themselves into anything they please. They need a recommendation from some one, who must say who they are and what they are; but we, we need no introduction, no recommendation. You are recommended and introduced, inasmuch as you are a child of our holy Church. Hold fast to this, my child, and speak to me about whatever you wish to, of what is sacred and what is profane, of what is great and what is small; you will always find with me a home. If they disgust you in the world, and make you feel homeless, remember, here is rest and here is home. Look out of doors! Your father has, above there, a hot-house for foreign plants which are not at home in our climate; this room is your hot-house for the plant of holy faith which is not at home yonder. My child, I cast no stone at any one, but I tell you, and you know already, this plant is not of this world, and is, in this world, in a foreign climate; it has been brought to us from heaven."

The Priest stood looking out of the window, and Manna sat on the sofa.

For some time not a word was spoken. Manna was deeply affected by this elevated strain of cordial sympathy. There was no need of any hesitating preliminaries; she was at once conducted into the inmost sanctuary.

She asked at last in a timid way, how she ought to conduct herself towards all the persons who were received as friends in the house of her parents, and who plumed themselves upon their culture.

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"You question well, you question definitely, and that is the mark of a mature mind," replied the Priest. "Know then, that you are to smile at all the boastful things you will be obliged to listen to; they pretend to be so great, and they are so very little. These learned ones believe that the world is without understanding, and that it is ruled with no more wisdom than their understanding and their wisdom attribute to it; they put God in one scale, and their own brain in the other. Pah!"

The Priest spoke now in a wholly different tone; he was violent and bitter, so that Manna shrank together with affright. The Priest, who noticed this, composed himself again, saying:—

"You see that I am still weak, and allow myself to be carried away by excitement. My child, there are two things which conquer the world: their names are God and the Devil, or, when transferred into the domain of our own interior being, Piety and Frivolity. Piety sees everything as holy; appearances are only a veil, while Frivolity sees nothing as holy. Piety is the law of God; Frivolity has released herself from the law of God, and sports with the world of appearances according to her own pleasure. Between piety and frivolity there is a half-and-half state, and that is the worst of all. Frivolity reaches its extreme point and is capable of being converted, to which we have some glorious witnesses; but the heroes of reason, so-called, or, more properly speaking, the weaklings of reason, *they* are not capable of being converted, for they are wholly destitute of that disposition which tends to humility."

The Priest thought that Manna would understand him to be pointing out Eric and Pranken; he did not want to be any more personal at first, but the ground was to be broken. Now he turned round, smiling, and seating himself said:—

"But, my child, let us not to-day lose ourselves in such general considerations. What have you to say?"

Manna complained of finding it so hard to complete another year of probation, moving about in the world in order to be released from it.

The Priest reassured her with the words:—

"You wish to take the veil; you have taken it already; it is drawn over you, and over the world, though invisible to every body else. Things in the world do not affect your real self at all; there is a veil between you and the world, which will be wholly dropped only when death gives us deliverance."

The Priest proceeded to exhort her to subject herself to what was the hardest of all experiences to youth and ardent zeal,—she was not to consider it as her vocation to change the opinions of others, but she was to labor for her own perfection.

He went more cautiously to work than Pranken did; he avoided a direct attack upon Eric, as this might awaken an interest in Manna towards him. He even praised him; but it was done in that tone of condescension and pity, which comes so natural to him who upholds a dogmatic faith. He inculcated upon her the fact, that she would soon understand how trifling an affair it would be to annihilate this liberal culture, as it was termed,—that it was in its very nature exceedingly fragile. This could be plainly seen from each one of these so-called liberally cultivated people wanting to be something entirely different from his neighbor. Each one of Roland's teachers, for instance, had a different method, a different course of instruction, different principles, and a different end in view.

When Manna asked why the Priest had not used his influence to keep Eric from being received into the family, he replied that he was glad to find her so zealous, but a person was obliged to let some things take their course in this world; and besides, from the outset, all resistance to her father would have been to no purpose, for Roland had insisted upon having his own way. And notwithstanding Eric was a complete heretic, he recognized the holy, to a certain extent, although there was much pride mingled with this recognition.

He feared to make Eric of too much importance, and so he added, almost with timidity, that these apparently mild and enthusiastic idealists were just the most dangerous.

Then he went on to advise Manna to consider the world around as alien to herself.

The interview seemed now to have become rather painful. The Priest suddenly and abruptly said that it was time for Manna to return home, as they would be expecting her there. She was not to conceal that she had been with him, but he would excuse her now in advance, if she should often suffer a considerable time to intervene between her calls upon him; he should remain unshaken in the conviction that her inmost soul continued devoted to the holy faith.

"Now go, my child," he said in conclusion, "and be assured that I shall pray for you."

Manna had risen; she looked at him earnestly. The inquiry seemed to be awakened in her own soul: Can, then, one human being pray for another?

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The inquiry which Roland had proposed presented itself afresh, and grew to be the riddle of her life. She desired to sacrifice herself for another, her whole existence should be only a prayer for another.

How is this possible?

She wanted to ask if it were true, and if true, why it was, that one human being could do more harm than good to another; that one could lay a burden upon another soul, but no one could remove that burden. She wanted to say this to the Priest, and receive some help from him, but he repeated, — "Now go, my child!" She turned away her inquiring eyes and went.

On her way home, she stood near a field, watching a laborer who was busy ploughing, and the thought occurred to her: Yes, one can sacrifice himself for another, for the souls of men are nothing by themselves; all that breathe are nothing but a breath of God; all movement in the earth and in the great world is nothing but the movement of a single Being.

Everything seemed to swim before her eyes; she saw the peasant ploughing, she saw the vessels floating upon the Rhine, and the birds flying in the air. All is one, all is little, the whole is only a giant's toy.

CHAPTER II.

ONE'S OWN PART IN THE WORLD.

MANNA walked dreamily along, but became roused to full consciousness when the dogs Rose and Thistle sprang up to her, rejoiced to have their mistress with them again.

"So our wild doe has got home?" cried a voice from a distance; it was that of the field-guard, Claus, who had the dogs with him. "I mustn't speak to you now as I used to," he exclaimed. "Hi! how tall you are! But what are you so sad for? Cheer up! Just see, Fräulein, all round, as far down as the rocks there, your father has bought it all."

"Can one buy the earth?" asked Manna, as if waking from a dream.

Claus replied: —

"What do you say? I don't understand you."

"It was of no consequence," answered Manna. Can one buy then the immovable ground? From whom? Who has a right to it? This question presented itself to Manna as an enigma; she gazed intently into the empty air, and hardly heard the huntsman's narrative of his recent experiences. When he said: — "Yes, Fräulein, I've been a simpleton, and am very sorry for it," she asked him: —

"What have you been doing?"

"Zounds! I repeat that I've been doing nothing; that all my life I've been a simple, honest fellow, and not a bad one at all. The bigger rascal one is, so much the better off. What now does the world give me? People can make you bad, but good — who can make you that? The only comfort grows there on the hillside — there's where the drop of comfort comes from, but I can get only a beggar's sup. I should just like to know whether Herr Dournay is a true man; I think there's no true men going now except Herr Weidmann. You've been in the convent, and is't a fact that you want to be a nun?"

Manna had not time to answer, for Claus continued, laughing: —

"I've many a time thought that I'd like to go into a convent, too. Everybody ought to be able to go into a convent when he's sixty years old; nothing to do there but drink and drink, until death claps his warrant upon you. But I don't want to make death's acquaintance yet awhile; I say, like the constable of Mattenheim: Lord, take your own time, I'm in no hurry."

Although so early in the morning, the field-guard was a little excited and talked a little thick. Manna was afraid of him, but now gave him her hand and went off with the dogs.

"I'd like to ask one favor of you!" he called after her.

She stopped.

He came up, and stated to her that the gauger had given him a ticket in the Cathedral lottery, and he had sold it to Sevenpiper, and if the number drew the first prize, he should tear all the hair out of his head, and never have a minute's comfort with his children the rest of his life. If Manna would give him a dollar, he could buy the ticket back again.

As Manna hesitated, he added: —

"It's a pious matter, and just suits you."

Manna did not comprehend what he meant, and she learned now, for the first time, that a lottery had been set up to raise money for the completion of the Cathedral. She gave the dollar, and walked quickly away.

She went along the Rhine. The smooth surface was broken only by the circling ripples, and the fishes could be seen sporting beneath; the willows on the banks quivered in the morning breeze, and were mirrored in the stream. Manna entered the park. The fragrance of flowers was wafted on the fresh, sparkling air, and a divine peace was diffused everywhere around. The flowers

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glistened with a lustrous brightness, and each color was heightened and glorified by the other; the white added to the splendor of the blue, and the red was softened in its burning glow, making a holy, peaceful harmony.

Each flower, each tree in blossom, helps to make fragrant the air which the daughter of the house inhales; and around her is a human atmosphere whose elements are hard to analyze. The father, harsh, and violent, wanted to force his will upon his child either by kindness or severity; the mother, wrapped up in her own feelings, wholly taken up with herself and her ardent longings for worldly show.

The Professorin thought much of Manna, and would willingly have given her rest; would have helped her over the first days and imparted what she could, but she knew very well that it was not best to offer anything before it was asked for.

The Aunt's look and manner seemed always to be saying: I am all ready, if there is anything you want of me. There was no particular thing that she desired to proffer Manna, but she would have held back nothing.

Eric was very deeply interested; he smiled to himself as the comparison occurred to him: This child out of the convent must feel as you did, when you left the regiment and doffed your uniform; formerly kept under strict discipline, she must now be under self-discipline altogether, and must feel the want of commands, of comrades.

Manna took the single seat under the weeping ash, that had been put in order for her again, and now she wondered why she had been so rude yesterday to Eric.

She wanted to say the first time she saw him: Do not believe that I presumed in this way because you are dependent and in service.

And at this same moment Eric was walking alone in the park, and proposing to say when he should meet with Manna: I would not have our intercourse begin with ill-humor or a misunderstanding.

Manna, hearing approaching footsteps, now looked up and saw Eric coming along the path. She remained seated. As he came nearer, he greeted her, but neither of them uttered the contemplated speech.

Eric began: —

"I should like to give you a proof that I hold sacred the interior sanctuary of your thought — and if yesterday I — it was a day of great excitement. I beg you would also remember that my employment tends to make me interest myself even in the thoughts of those with whom I have no concern."

His tone was subdued. Manna was at a loss what to reply. Both were silent, and there was nothing heard but the singing of the birds. At last Manna said: —

"Tell me about Roland. What is his character?"

"My father used to say, dear Fräulein, "that no one could describe to another the characteristics of his fellow; that each one sees the traits in an entirely different light."

"You are evading my question."

"No. I wanted to say to you that I do not consider it feasible to characterize any person justly. If I praise Roland, it seems to me as if I were praising a portion of myself; and if I point out his deficiencies, then perhaps I am too severe, because I feel as if they were my own. One thing, however, a human being may be allowed to say in his own commendation; and so I may be allowed to say of Roland, that he has industry, perseverance, and truthfulness; this is the solid rock on which the moral superstructure can be erected."

Manna involuntarily held up her prayer-book with both hands, as if it were a shield.

Eric, thinking he understood the meaning of this motion, said: —

"It has been, and is, a leading object with me, that Roland should gain an eye of his own, and trust to his own eye."

"An eye of his own?" Manna asked in wonderment.

"Yes, you will readily perceive what I mean by that. And now I have one favor to ask for myself."

"For yourself?"

"Yes. Simply believe that I hold in high respect your ideal of life, because I regard it as sincere in you; and the favor I have to ask is, that you will do the same with me."

"I was not aware —" Manna answered, blushing deeply.

A sort of pain darted through her soul; on her face there was an expression of perplexity and conflict, for she was haunted by what Pranken had said. Is this demand of Eric's what Pranken had called setting up as a pattern of honesty, and did Eric, who might know of that view, exhort her to judge impartially, whilst he laid a special emphasis on having an eye of one's own? She could not complete her sentence, for Roland came up, saying, —

"Indeed! Have you found each other out so soon?"

Manna rose hastily, and went to the villa, holding Roland by the hand.

Pranken came out with Sonnenkamp to

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meet them, and immediately said that he had been to church too; but he considered it a duty not to distract Manna by speaking to her in the morning.

Manna expressed her thanks.

At breakfast, Pranken had many anecdotes to relate, and he did it well, of the royal hunting-lodge, and particularly of events at Court. And he succeeded in giving a new and humorous setting out to many worn-out garrison stories, that were fresh to this circle.

"Dear child," Sonnenkamp broke in, "you have not congratulated Herr von Pranken on his appointment as chamberlain."

Manna bowed in congratulation, and Pranken referred in a cheerful way to the contrast there would be between his summer life as a husbandman, and his winter as chamberlain. He said, further, that the happiest day of his life had been the one he had spent on the island ploughing; and a single rose was the only thing that he envied, upon which glances fell that he would have liked to turn towards himself.

Manna blushed.

Pranken went on to say that the Prince would drink the waters, this summer, at Carlsbad.

Sonnenkamp immediately added, that Doctor Richard some time ago had prescribed these waters to him as better suited to his case than those of Vichy.

All the links seemed supplied for a complete chain when Pranken narrated, in continuation, that his brother-in-law Clodwig, and his sister Bella, would visit Carlsbad this summer.

"And you must accompany us," Sonnenkamp said, nodding to Pranken.

Before she was fairly settled at home, Manna saw herself withdrawn from thence into the whirlpool of a watering-place life. Mention was made of Lina's non-acceptance of the invitation, and Pranken spoke very cleverly of the pleasant impression that her half-childlike, half-matronly appearance made upon him. He wanted to obviate any ill effects from Manna's hearing that he had for a while paid court to her friend. He then declared that he would take the snow-white pony to Wolfsgarten with him, in order to have it perfectly trained for Manna. Her remark, that she now took no pleasure on horseback, was set aside in an almost authoritative way by her father, who said the physician had directed only the day before, that Manna should keep as much as possible in the open air, and take a great deal of exercise.

Manna must now give a name to the snow-white little horse. Pranken wanted to have this done in due form, but Manna declined. When they rose from breakfast, she went to the stable, and gave to the snow-white pony three lumps of sugar.

"Now for the name — the name!" cried Sonnenkamp.

"She has given him his name," replied Pranken laughing; "she has given it to him bodily. Sugar is the pony's name, is it not?"

A smile passed over Manna's countenance for the first time, as she replied, —

"No, we will call him 'Snowdrop.'"

Pranken bade her good-bye with much feeling, and rode away in a smart trot down the road, making the sparks fly under his horse's hoofs. Manna saw the groom leading behind him the snow-white pony by the halter; she would not be perverse, but be moderate in all things. It seemed to her emblematic, to ride on horseback again, before she renounced all worldly trifles, and lived wholly in herself and for eternal realities.

Manna accompanied her father through the park and garden, and through the conservatories, and thanked him heartily for promising to send to the convent beautiful flowers, which could thrive well there in the enclosed courtyard. Sonnenkamp had it in his mind to confide to her the expected elevation to the rank of the nobility, but he wanted to wait for a suitable opportunity. The child must not be too suddenly introduced into the distracting whirl. He observed with satisfaction the large southern trees and plants, which were soon to be brought out into the open air. At first they only opened the doors in order to let in the outside air, and then the plants were brought out into sheltered situations out-of-doors. So would he do with his child.

Manna had soon made a fixed arrangement for the day's occupations, which she adhered to as an established rule; and this methodical strictness soon exerted an influence over the whole family. She found it difficult to deal with her mother, and chiefly in the matter of dress; for Frau Ceres, who changed her dress several times a day, wished, Manna to do the same. But she was in the habit of putting on in the morning the dress which she was to wear all day, and was even reluctant to accept any service from her own dressing-maid. She kept on the morning dress, and it seemed to her as the only suitable thing, and alone worthy of the higher human life, that the nuns never varied their dress. By this means all distraction and waste of thought on outward appearance were saved.

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She took no part in the beneficent activity of the Professorin. She had briefly given as a reason, that she had still too much to do for herself, and was not prepared to do for others.

She had, moreover, a decided antipathy to the assistant, Fräulein Milch.

She did not express this in words, but in her whole conduct; she avoided speaking with Fräulein Milch, and never gave her hand to her.

This was the effect of Fräulein Perini's teachings, who had withdrawn her from all connection with Fräulein Milch before Manna had entered the convent, as if the modest housekeeper had been a witch who could do her harm. She used to say to the child:

"The whole life and character of this person are an impropriety."

Manna took regular lessons of the Aunt in harp-playing, and Aunt Claudine was the only one who seemed to possess her confidence. She showed her copy-books to her, and particularly the astronomical ones with the alternate blue leaves and the golden pictures of the stars.

During the clear evenings, she spent several hours with the Aunt upon the flat roof of the villa, looking at the stars through a telescope. It was evident that Manna had been thoroughly taught; for the convent-school made a special point of surpassing the worldly schools in scientific instruction. Of course, all science was confined within the bounds which faith prescribes.

With all the dignified loftiness of her demeanor, there was something charmingly attractive in Aunt Claudine; she seemed to have lost or renounced something in life, and so there was a gentleness which more completely won Manna's affection.

In the Professorin, with all her friendliness, there was something commanding; she was self-contained, and gave without ever receiving.

Aunt Claudine, on the other hand, in spite of the difference of years, could be a young person's friend, and Manna felt the tranquillizing effect of this friendship.

Manna's maturity of thought often excited more surprise than even her actual knowledge. Her emotional nature had been widely developed; her religious earnestness and her settled religious convictions gave her serene composure and elevation, which might be mistaken for pride. She always felt as if she were placed on an invisible height, far above those who had no living faith. But this was not a boastful feeling of superiority; it was a sense of being supported, every moment, by all the great influences and views through whose aid so many holy men and women had won the battle of life.

Manna took especial delight in the lessons upon the harp; she said to the Aunt, that it seemed to her as if she had never heard herself before.

The Aunt explained that this was the first step of progress; that improvement really begins when one hears and sees himself.

Manna's eyes beamed softly, and she asked Aunt Claudine if this standing up alone by one's self in the world had not often been very hard for her.

"Certainly, my child. When one in youth makes a decision that affects the whole life, he does not know the real meaning of it."

Manna grasped convulsively the cross upon her bosom, and the Aunt continued: —

"Yes, my child, it requires courage and energy to be an old maid; at the time this resolution is taken, one is not fully conscious of how much it will require. Now, when I am alone, I am contented and peaceful; but in society and the world, I seem to myself often so superfluous, and as if only tolerated out of pity. Yes, my child, and one must take care not to be compassionate and sentimental towards one's self, or bitter; for the pitying of one's self often leads to bitterness and resentfulness."

"I can comprehend that," returned Manna. "Did you never have a longing to be able to enter a convent?"

"My child, I would not like to mislead and disturb you."

"No, say what you please, I can hear it all."

"Well, then, there are some institutions productive of so much harm, that they have forfeited the right of being perpetuated, at least, as we regard it. And, dear child, I could not, myself, live without art, without secular music, without the sight of what the plastic arts have produced and are still producing; herein I agree fully with my brother."

Manna looked in amazement at the Aunt; and she had the impression that a new view of life was unfolded to her, that was like the religious, and yet wholly peculiar in itself.

Towards Eric's mother, Manna was respectful but reserved: She treated her brother's teacher as a member of the family, but as a piece of property, an object of utility, to which one could have recourse whenever there was need. There were hours and days when she had no more to do with him than if he had been a chair or

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a table. She often put a question to him directly and naturally, if she wanted any particular thing elucidated; and as soon as Eric began to expatiate beyond the special topic under consideration, she would say with great decision: —

"I did not want to know about that. I thank you for the information you have given."

She never received any instruction for which she did not immediately thank him, just as she would a servant for anything handed to her.

The whole family had the feeling that here was a strength adequate to attain its own end.

Manna did not visit in the neighborhood; she insisted upon it that she had come only to be with her parents and her brother, and no one else.

Sonnenkamp was alarmed at this determined and uncompliant bearing.

CHAPTER III.

EVERYTHING FLIES THAT HAS WINGS.

MANNA soon expressed a determined purpose to get a better insight into the method and direction of her brother's education. She wanted to be present at Eric's lessons.

Sonnenkamp endeavored to induce the Aunt to inform Eric of this request, but she declined. Manna had better ask him herself.

Sonnenkamp was deeply vexed at this refusal, but Manna's resolution was taken at once. She expressed her wish at the table, assigning no reason, for she thought that the real one might wound, and any other than the real one she could not consent to offer as a pretext.

After they had risen from the table, Eric gave her the arrangement of the hours of study, and declared himself ready to conform to her wishes, merely adding that he should continue his instruction without any reference to her presence.

Manna now sat at the window with her embroidery, whilst Eric and Roland pursued their occupations at the table. By noon Manna had laid aside her work, and was listening with closed eyes. The next day she brought no work with her, and thus she sat there day after day with the two, listening with interest even to the mathematics. The musical voice of Eric seemed to have a magical charm for the proud and cold maiden, and at many an utterance she opened wide her eyes, as if she must satisfy herself who this really was that was speaking.

One day, however, she came only to say that she should come no more.

"I could still learn a great deal from you," she said, "but it is better that I should keep by myself. I thank you," she said again; but as if recollecting that she was continually doing this, she quickly added, —

"I thank you differently from what I have before. I acknowledge the delicacy with which you have spared me the perplexity of answering the question I see you wanted to put to me, whether I was satisfied with your instruction. It is very kind not to have asked this question."

"You are good at reading countenances," answered Eric. And so they parted.

From this time Manna's haughty and even her confident bearing toward Eric was gone; there was a sort of shyness, and she seldom spoke to him. But this want of notice was something very far removed from that haughty indifference with which she had formerly disregarded him; there was defiance, angry resistance in her demeanor, as if she would say, I do not comprehend why you are of any interest to me whatever.

Manna also occasionally visited the castle, going by herself with her two dogs. She had the Architect explain to her the plans of this building as it was being restored, and as it existed formerly.

She took an interest in the work, and entered into consultation with her father in regard to the fitting up of the hall already finished, the so-called Knight's hall.

Sonnenkamp was busily employed in buying the ancient weapons to be hung upon the walls, and the armor to be placed upon the pillars. He could not refrain from saying to Manna beforehand, that he intended to dedicate the castle in the autumn, on her birthday; but she desired that this should be omitted. This continual festivity and banqueting did not suit her; and she was particularly anxious that her birthday should be marked by no external celebration, even of the simplest kind.

Since her return from the convent, if she would honestly confess it to herself, — and Manna ventured to confess all, — she had taken greater pleasure in her dogs than in anything else. She had even written a letter to the Superior, asking whether they would allow her to bring a dog with her into the convent, but had burned the letter afterwards. She represented to herself how laughable it would be for a nun to be going through the garden with a dog at her heels, and how intolerable if every nun had a dog of her own. She smiled to herself

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for the first time, and then again asked herself the question, Why do we have no animals in the convent? Eric found her as she was sitting down and talking to her dogs.

"Do you not think," she asked, "that a dog, this one, for instance, has an unspeakably sad expression of face?"

"Whoever looks for it can find it. The mystics say that it came from the fall of man; that since then, all creatures have a mournful expression."

Manna thanked him, but this time with a look only, and not with words. Surprising how the man can enter into every thing! And why is he still a heretic! Why?"

A carriage was advancing toward them, and a white handkerchief was already waving in the distance. "Manna!" was called out; Eric withdrew. Manna rose and went to meet Lina, who got out and let the carriage drive on.

"Ah!" exclaimed Lina, "you are already on such good terms with one another! you need hide nothing from me. Ah, how fine! This is right splendid! I've something to tell you about my love; now kiss me. Ah, I see you haven't kissed each other yet, you don't how to kiss. Just think, Manna, how simple I've been; I made myself believe, at one time, that the Baron von Pranken was fond of me — no, that's not exactly what I meant, but I made myself believe that I liked him, and now I will tell you at once, that I love and I am loved."

"We all love God, and we are loved by him."

"Ah, yes, by God too. But Albert — Do you know Albert? you must know him, for he's building a castle for you. At that time at the musical festival — I saw you at once, and beckoned to you, but you didn't observe me — that was the very first time we ever came to an explanation. Ah, you can't begin to think how happy I am. At the beginning I couldn't take part in the singing: I was afraid all the time I should scream too loud; but after that I sang with the rest. Ah, it was so beautiful — so beautiful! we did nothing else but float away in music; and he sings splendidly too, though not so grandly as Herr Dournay. Now do tell me, Manna, how you felt when you heard him sing so? Did you know that he was the man you asked me about when you had the angel-wings on your shoulders."

Lina did not wait for an answer, but went on: —

"You must have seen me on the shore, when I met you, and I was leaning on my Albert's arm for the first time. I didn't want to speak to you there among the nuns and scholars; I shouldn't have been able to tell you all there. You don't take it amiss that I didn't appear to see you? Ah, I saw everybody, the whole world at once! Ah, and all was so splendid! And at the table there 'twas so merry! And once he asked me why I seemed all at once so sad. Then I confessed to him that I was thinking of you, how you were going back again to the convent, where 'twas so silent and so dull. I think the corridors have all got a cold. Ah, why can't you be as merry as we? Do be merry! There's nothing better in the world, and you've got all, and can have all in the world. Oh, do be merry! Ah, there flies a swallow, the first swallow. Oh, if I could only fly in that way up to him at the castle, and bid him good-morning, and keep flying to him and flying away again. Ah, Manna! Manna!"

It was very odd to her to see and hear this joyous, fluttering youthful companion; she could say nothing in response, and Lina did not seem to expect her to say anything, for she continued:

"So I was thinking as I was coming here, that if I were you, I'd issue an order or something of that sort to the whole country round, that in three days they should bring me all the birds they could catch, and I'd pay them an awful amount of money for doing it, and then I'd let all the birds fly away again up into the air. Don't you feel as if you were a bird that had been caught, and had got free again? Ah, and it's smart in you to come in the spring; there's too much dancing to be done, if you come home in the winter. Fourteen balls I went to, the first winter, and ever so many small parties. And if one then has her sweetheart — Ah, Manna, you can't think how beautiful that is! or perhaps you do know now. I beg you do tell me every thing. I am not yet betrothed to Albert, but we are as good as betrothed. You won't be a nun, will you? Believe what I say, they don't want you for a nun at all, they are only after your money. Would you like to be a baroness? I shouldn't. To be "my lady'd" all the time when there's no need of it, and then to be laughed at behind one's back; no, I shouldn't like it at all. If a born lady does anything foolish, there's nothing to be said; but if one of us commits a folly, hi! the whole city and the whole land has to bear the blame of it. Ah, such a rich girl has a good deal to suffer for it! Here come the men and want to marry her money, and here come the nuns and want her to become a nun for her money. You may be

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sure, if you were one of those women yonder carrying coals out of the boat, the nuns wouldn't have you; you might be as clever, and as lovable, and as good as you are now. Yes, if you hadn't any money, and if you hadn't so much money, the nuns wouldn't want to have anything to do with you. Don't they try to make you believe that you've been called to be a saint? Don't believe it. Ah, in the convent! When I hear people telling how beautiful it was there on the convent-island, I've always thought: Yes indeed, right pretty, if one only goes there on a pleasure excursion; but to be a nun there! — Ah, Manna, if I could only make you as happy as I am! Do be jolly too! Ah, good heavens, why can't one give to another some of his enjoyment; I've so much — so much, and I should like most dearly to give some of it to you. But what do we talk so much for? Come, catch me! Do you remember our old play: 'Everything flies that has wings'? Come, catch me!"

Lina ran off with fluttering garments, and when she stopped saw that Manna had not followed her. She waited until she came up, and the two maidens walked in silence to the villa.

CHAPTER IV.

"THROUGH THE NEW DOOR."

Lina staid with Manna, so that she was unable to shake off her school-friend. When they went together to church, if Manna said, going and returning, that she would rather not talk in the morning, then Lina insisted that Manna need not say anything, she would do all the talking herself. She chatted about everything that came into her mind, things past and things to come.

As soon as she woke up she ran through the gamut, then ran trilling through the house, and almost every hour of the day, when there was no caller and they were within doors, she sat at the piano in the music saloon, singing and playing incessantly, mixing up serious and melancholy, classic and modern music, no matter what, so that it made sound enough. She would follow up one of Pergolese's mournful dirges with a merry Tyrolese carol.

The whole house was entirely changed by Lina's presence, and at the table there was a great deal of laughter. In cherry time the hot-houses at Villa Eden already supplied early apples; and Lina had the habit of never peeling an apple, but biting into it whole, congratulating herself that she could do it without being reprimanded by her mother. She paid no regard to Sonnenkamp's reproving look; she was an independent girl, doing recklessly whatever she fancied, and so accustomed to being scolded, that she had become hardened to it.

Lina ate heartily, like a good healthy peasant girl, while Manna ate as if it were a matter of compulsion. Lina took pleasure in eating, and was hungry all the time. She could always take something, she said of herself, and if anything at the table had a particularly good relish, she would say: —

"Aren't you glad, Manna, that you've got rid of that convent food? Ah, my first meal at home was a new experience to me, and here you have very nice things."

She also liked a glass of wine, and was rallied on that account. She begged Eric to defend her, and he replied: —

"That's easily done. It's a romantic absurdity to look upon it as a fine thing for a girl not to take pleasure in eating and drinking; and drinking wine is assuredly not an unfeminine act. Isn't drinking wine a much pleasanter thing to see than eating meat, nourishing one's self with animal food?"

Everybody laughed except Manna, who looked at Eric with an unmoved face. Strange how this man gives a surprising turn to every thought, and induces surprising turns of thought in other people!

Manna felt as if she were driven out of the house by Lina's presence.

Only at Frau Dournay's, for whom Lina entertained a holy awe, could Manna get any time for being alone; she felt herself in concealment when she fled to the green cottage, and by this means she came nearer to the Professorin, almost in spite of herself. Her uniform serenity of soul, her never-failing willingness to devote herself to others, were perceived by Manna, and she was startled at hearing her say,—

"You wanted to make a request of me, dear child. Why do you hold back?"

"I, a request? What request?"

"You would like that Lina should come here, but you avoid acknowledging this to me and to her. If you will honestly confess to me that you would like this, I will arrange the matter."

Manna confessed that she had not had the courage to express her wish.

By the next day Lina was settled at the cottage with the Professorin, and there she was merry as a cricket, and enlivened the whole house with her cheerfulness, and her fresh bubbling gaiety alone. Wherever she was, walking, standing, or sitting, she sang to herself like a bird on the branch, and the breasts of the hearers were refreshed. The

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Aunt played an accompaniment for her songs, and the clear, bell-like tone of her voice was full of fresh health and bright joy. She sang without the least effort, and her love added a tone of deep feeling to her singing, which one would not have supposed she possessed,

She was perfectly undisciplined, but she was very particular about her dress, especially since she had been in love, and she liked to look at herself in the glass. But to bother herself about the inner life, — "That's not my style," was her uniform manner of speaking. She lived her own life, was a Catholic, because she was born so, and it was too much trouble to make any change. She laughed, sang and danced; yesterday is gone, and to-morrow will look out for itself. Amongst all these persons who bore a heavy burden in their souls, who were imposing some heavy task upon themselves, Lina was the only light-hearted child of nature; and she was regarded by those who looked upon her rather with envious than contemptuous eyes.

"Ah! could one but be like her!" sighed each one in his own way.

Lina, gradually, became less demonstrative and excitable through the quiet influence of the Professorin. It gave her pleasure to be able to understand a great deal of what the Professorin said; but there were many things beyond her comprehension. What does it matter? One must not take all there is in the dish,— one must leave something for others.

It was beautiful to see Manna coming in her bright summer dress through the park to the cottage. But she manifested to the Professorin only a respectful confidence; she always addressed her as Madame, and spoke to her in French, the language she had been accustomed to use at the convent. To all questions she gave direct answers.

"Had you any particular friend at the convent?" the Professorin once asked.

"No, it is not allowed. One must not show any special affection, but treat all with an equal love."

"If it would not weary you, I should like to ask another question."

"Oh, you do not weary me in the least. I like to talk of the convent better than any thing else; I think of it all the time. Ask what you please."

"Had you a particularly confidential relation with any one of the ladies?"

Manna mentioned the name of the Superior, and was greatly surprised to hear the Professorin extol the beauty of such a life as hers; that there could be nothing more blissful than to confer peace and joy upon young children, to aid them to become strong, to overcome the trials of existence. It was a life that death could not change, and in which the sorrow of parting and absence could never be known.

The Professorin repeated that she should regard it as a crime, to say a single word that should shake a soul desiring to devote itself to such a life.

"Dear child, thou hast chosen the right path according to thy light."

Manna bowed, and she seemed transfigured. It did not occur to her that the Professorin had spoken to her all at once so affectionately. But now she shrank into herself with alarm. Is this not one of the temptations? Does not this woman praise her, enter into her utmost soul, in order to win her over and seduce her from the faith? A glance of suspicion shot from those youthful eyes upon the elderly lady. And yet Manna returned, again and again, to the Professorin, as is if she were fleeing from something, and could find concealment only there.

Frau Dournay's uniform serenity of soul, her perpetual willingness to devote herself to the service of others, had a magnetic attraction for her, and before she was aware of it, she formed more intimate relations, and became more confidential with the Professorin than she had ever believed possible.

The struggle and the vacillation of the girl's young heart were revealed first of all to the Professorin. As they were sitting once in the garden, having fortunately declined to go with Lina, Roland, and Eric, on an excursion upon the Rhine, Manna said, looking timidly around,—

"Why should it be a sin to take delight in nature? Is not joy itself a sort of devotion?"

The Professorin making no reply, Manna said with pressing earnestness: —

"Do speak, I entreat you."

"A writer," replied she, "whom you do not probably revere as we do, has said: God loves better to see a heart filled with joy than with sorrow."

"What's the man's name?"

"Gotthold Lessing."

Manna requested to have the passage pointed out. The Professorin brought the book, and from that time there was a free interchange of thought between them. The Professorin continued very cautious in her remarks, and repeated that she should look upon it as a sacrilege to deprive a believing heart of its religious convictions.

Manna declared that she was strong

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enough to enter into the thoughts of the children of the world, as they are termed, without getting lost herself.

The Professorin repeatedly warned and advised her, but she insisted that she had returned to the world in order to perceive what it had to proffer to her, and then to renounce all freely. She expressed a firm determination not to become Pranken's wife, in fact, not to be married at all. She came very near disclosing to the Professorin, that she wanted to devote herself as an expiatory sacrifice, not from compulsion, but, through heavenly grace, freely renouncing all the delights of the world.

"To you," said Manna, with tearful eyes, "I could tell all."

It would have required only a single word, one encouraging appeal, and Manna would have told everything to the Mother. But she earnestly entreated not to be made the repository of any secret; not because she could not keep it faithfully, but it would be a burden to her, and she should never feel at peace if she should divert a being formed to live in the purest sphere from occupying her true place. She spoke very guardedly, choosing her words carefully, for Manna must not have the least suspicion that she also was hiding a secret; she simply let it be understood that she favored the maiden's resolution to take the veil.

Something of Sonnenkamp's nature seemed awakened in Manna's soul. Was this woman encouraging her only in order to gain a firmer hold upon her? But then, as she looked up into the quiet, calm face of the Mother, she felt impelled to fall upon her neck and beg her forgiveness for having had such unjust thoughts of her. The Professorin saw the conflict in the child, but gave it a different interpretation; she had no suspicion that distrust of the worst kind was felt by Manna.

As Manna passed through the new door on her way home through the meadows, she suddenly stood still. Here she had stood on the first morning, here had the thought darted through her soul that she must often pass through this gateway, over this path, engaged in deep struggles, and contending for victory. This foreboding had now been realized.

CHAPTER V.

BE LED INTO TEMPTATION.

MANNA went regularly to church, and prayed with constant and unchanging fervor, but a peculiar shyness held her back from the parsonage. She said constantly to herself that the Priest himself had told her that it would be well to avoid seeing him for a time, till she had become familiar with her new life.

Often, in the midst of conversation with the Professorin, a fear came over her that she was binding herself too closely to the life of another, and she felt that she must regain her power of looking beyond all the varying phenomena of the world. She at last came to the determination to go to the Priest, to whom she began to explain and excuse her long absence; but he interrupted her mildly, saying that she need tell him nothing, he had read her soul, and believed that he understood her feelings; she must appear to herself, like a person who, returning to earth after his departure from it, watches the actions of men, their restless days and nights of painful dreams, their attempts to satisfy or to benumb the conscience.

He impressed it upon her that she ought to judge people gently; the worst sinners indeed were those who believed they knew what they were doing, and it was most difficult to pardon them; but if we take the highest views, these were the ones who most needed forgiveness, because, in spite of what they say, they really do not know what they do, and we can always say of them, Lord, forgive them. There is nothing left for us, but silently to pray for their salvation, imploring the merciful Father to grant them redemption.

Without mentioning any name, he then went on to represent to her that there are some people, who, with outward piety and self-complacency, perform so-called good works, and borrow holy words for the expression of thoughts far removed from what is really divine.

He thus described the Professorin without naming her.

Then he delineated others, who, full of knowledge, swerve constantly from the central truth, and who, without having any fixed goal of their own, imagine that they are able to lead others.

Thus he delineated Eric.

With the greatest caution he painted the men of the world, who wish to force the Lord of heaven and earth to show them favor, and who with their scoffs banish all humility. He openly named as examples Doctor Richard and the Weidmann circle, but at the same time he had Sonnenkamp in view, but the daughter must make this application for herself.

Manna listened eagerly. As she looked out of the window, her eyes rested on her father's house, with the park and garden, and it seemed to her as if they must all be overwhelmed, the waters surge up from the

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Rhine, the everlasting floods submerge the earth, and only here in this room is the ark of safety.

Timidly, hardly breathing the words aloud, she mournfully asked why the task of returning into life was laid upon her.

The Priest gently consoled her, telling her that, as an eye which must soon close, to open again in eternity, watched from this window over all which passed below in the valley, so an unchanging eye was watching over her; she must enter the tumult without fear, having within her thoughts which looked down upon it all from a lofty height of their own. This was the real trial specially laid upon her.

He went farther, and charged Manna not to come to him again for a long time; she was to remain away for weeks and months, that she might gain strength within herself; she was to be fettered by no external bond, not even that of making stated visits to him, but all was to depend on her own free, steadfast, independent will; leaning upon herself, with no outward support, she was to conquer all temptations.

Manna asked hesitatingly, why the Priest had not taken upon himself the wide-extending benevolent work, which the Professorin was now commissioned by her father to carry on.

"Why?" exclaimed the Priest, with a flash in his usually quiet eye. "We cannot take what is not given to us; they must learn that this so-called benevolence, without the blessing of the Church, becomes absolutely null, and I command you to have nothing to do with it, for you cannot enter into such a fellowship."

Manna was much startled when the Priest told her that he did not consider her fitted to take the veil, that it would be better for her to be Pranken's wife.

The color mounted to Manna's face, and she moved her hands as if warding off a blow; she opened her mouth, but could not utter a word.

"It is well," said the Priest, soothingly, "it is well if you can conquer this too, but we do not call you, we do not beguile you; you must come at your own call, and follow your own leading. People will whisper to you, The parsons, for so they call us, have misled you with most cunning wiles. You must remember, the sun shining down upon us bears witness that I have urged you not to renounce the world entirely. If you cannot do otherwise, if you feel an imperative call, then you will be welcome to us; not otherwise, not even with all your wealth."

The Priest had arisen, and was walking up and down the room with hasty strides. A long pause ensued; he stood at the window, looking out, while Manna sat trembling on the sofa. The Priest turned towards her, saying, —.

"You see what esteem we feel for you, when we leave all to your own strength, the strength of faith and of renunciation within you; hold firmly to that, and let us speak freely and calmly to each other. Do you not think this Herr Dournay a most attractive man? Speak to me as openly and sincerely as you would to yourself."

"I don't yet know what to think. I am inclined to believe that there is something in him which might make him a noble instrument of the Holy Spirit."

"Ah! is that your feeling? Thank you for being so honest and unreserved. That is the wonderful art of the tempter, that he can assume the purest form; with a pretence of duty and the hope of conversion he can so tempt the poor child of humanity, that it does not notice that it has already fallen into evil. This then is the shape he takes for you? I advise you, yes, I require it of you, I command you, to attempt to change this false coin into true metal. Try it, it is your duty; and if you succeed, you are greater than I thought, and if you fail, you are cured for ever. The ways of Providence are wise, which have brought this man to you, and planted the thought of his conversion in your heart; you are bound, for the sake of his salvation and your own, to make the attempt and to persevere in it. Look out of doors! it is springtime, everything seems thriving and blooming in security; but the day will come when the tempest will burst forth, rending the branches and tearing up the roots, and so it must be. What is planted in you must be tried by the storm of temptation, with all its fine and cunning wiles; it must be tossed hither and thither till it is all but uprooted — not till then will you be strong."

Again the Priest strode up and down with heavy steps. Manna knew not what to say, nor how she was to leave this room, and go back again into the sight of men who were to be to her as shadows, as forms assumed by the tempter.

The Priest turned towards her, and said gently, —

"Now go, go, my daughter. And God be with thee."

He gave her his blessing, and Manna went. With a conflict in her heart, straining her powers to look at life as a spectacle, as a temptation which she must not avoid, she devoted herself to those around her, and no one suspected why she was so cheerful

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and ready to be induced to take part in every kind of merriment.

CHAPTER VI.

ANOTHER SPIRE BUILT.

THE Mother was the only one who suspected that any change was going on in Eric; he became peculiarly reserved, even shy. Instead of his former communicativeness, he was now very careful of what he said, especially in Manna's presence, as if he felt himself near one whose serenity must not be troubled.

But this change in Eric's demeanor soon attracted the notice of another observer who kept a keener watch. Bella came to call upon her future sister-in-law. She was very confidential towards Manna; she had the habit of putting her arm round the waist of girls whom she liked, and towards whom she desired to be gracious, and promenading with them in this affectionate way; but whenever she attempted this with Manna, the latter always made a movement as if she would shake her off, and finally told her, in so many words, that she disliked it. Bella smiled, but she was inwardly vexed. In this house, in this garden, she must encounter such rebuffs as she had never believed possible. But outwardly there was no trace that her feelings were hurt, although it required her utmost exertion to remain composed.

With an easy turn of the conversation, she asked Eric if he now had another pupil.

Eric answered her in the same light tone, that Manna had already completed her education.

Bella nodded pleasantly.

The formal visit to Manna was now over; and when she excused herself for not returning it, saying that it was her purpose to visit nowhere, Bella made a friendly call upon the Mother and the Aunt. She went back to Wolfsgarten with the resolution to give, hereafter, the go-by to this house and all its inmates. Otto wanted to marry a wife from it, and that was his affair; but she believed that she ought to call his attention to the fact, that in the mutual reserve of Manna and Eric there was the germ of a deeper feeling. Pranken replied with a spice of maliciousness, that the family tutor was not half so dangerous as he appeared to his sister, especially not to one whose character was grounded in religious conviction.

Pranken made frequent visits to Villa Eden, and always enlivened its inmates. But it did not escape Manna's penetrating observation, that he was an artisan, but not an artist; he displayed much clever ingenuity, but had no productive genius, and was unstable and impulsive. This was especially noticeable when Eric was present.

Pranken was never at a loss in uttering some pointed remark, but he could not carry on a discussion; novel propositions bewildered him, and he had no pertinent observations to bring forward, whilst Eric became more inspirited and more original by the presentation of opposing thoughts and new statements.

Eric was always the same from morning to night, while Pranken was a different being in the evening from what he was in the morning. In the morning he was obliged to rouse himself; he was tired, heavy, low-spirited; at evening he was lively, dashing, and full of energy. He often seemed languid and spiritless; and being aware of this, he was stimulated to exertion. There was always an element of disquiet in intercourse with him, and under an appearance of friendliness there was almost always a latent bitter hostility. He thought now, too, that he could discover an understanding between Eric and Manna.

Both Manna and Eric thought more of the universal, of the purely ideal, than they did of the personal; in her, this proceeded from the religious, and in him, from the philosophical element. In the beginning, Manna had held herself aloof from him with a sort of defiance, even with a positive antagonism; but gradually she came to perceive the inviolable truthfulness of his whole being. When Pranken was engaged in argument, he asserted what he had to say as if it were incontrovertible; while Eric, on the other hand, often replied: —

"I should like to be allowed first to state the question; for the best thing we can do in order to arrive at some actual result, is, to state the question sharply and definitely." "And," he added, laughing, "the old philosopher, Epictetus, has designated 'asking the right questions and exercising forbearance' as the very essence of philosophy."

"Who is Epictetus?" Manna would ask; and while Eric briefly gave an account of the life of this stoic, a slave, who had become a philosopher and taught after the manner of Socrates, adding some reflections of his own, Manna was alarmed to see how fully she agreed with him; her gods were different, but their devotional spirit was the same.

Pranken was jealous when he saw Manna deeply interested in Eric's expositions, and often tried to make him expose his heretical sentiments, so that he might become abhorrent to Manna.

There was frequently a sort of tourna-

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ment in which they took part, and Manna sat, as it were, upon a dais to crown the victor. In such a state of feeling, it easily happens that insignificant circumstances become the starting point of a life and death contest. And this was the case one day, when Pranken related in a merry way that to-day was a bonâ fide pilgrimage of the whole country to the railroad station, for they were expecting, by the evening train, the list of those who had drawn prizes in the Cathedral lottery; and all the poor people, the servants, male and female, the vine-dressers, the quarrymen, and the boatmen, were each one of them hoping to get the first prize. Manna had it on her lips to say that she had given money to Claus in order to redeem his ticket, but, before she could do it, Eric, unable to restrain himself, cried out: —

"This lottery is an atrocity, a disgrace to our age."

"What's that? What do you say?"

"I beg your pardon, I was hasty," said Eric, trying to divert the subject.

But Manna asked: —

"May we not know what your objection is?"

"I would rather not state it."

Manna's face flushed. This man, she thought, is also a heretic in regard to social institutions! But she quickly composed herself, and continued quietly: —

"It ought not to be a matter of indifference to you to be regarded as open to the charge of being unjust."

"Herr Captain," Pranken said, coming to her help, "would you favor us so far as to give us your view? It would be very kind of you if you would instruct us, and give us at length your objections." Then turning to Manna, he said in a low tone: —

"Take notice, this will be the order of his discourse. First, he declines to speak, like a singer who is urged to sing in company; then he asks pardon for his novel views; next comes a condescending definition; after that a citation from Professor Hamlet, to be succeeded by a moral burst of indignation, and every one who thinks otherwise is an idiot or a knave; and finally, when you think now is the grand finale, he adds something else, and winds up with a trill."

Eric perceived that he was to be irritated and goaded on, but he had self-control enough to say to himself: I will not be driven over the barriers. With quiet deliberation he proceeded to say: —

"First of all, I beg you would remember that Catholic as well as Protestant cathedrals are to be completed by this horrible and no longer unusual means."

"And why so horrible?" asked Manna.

"Yes, go on, go on!" urged Pranken, as if he were flourishing his horse-whip.

"Allow me to take more time," answered Eric; "I must take a longer spring."

"Proceed! proceed!" said Pranken sharply, twirling the ends of his moustache.

"The largest cathedrals," Eric began by saying, "are unfinished; quiet in the lap of earth rest thousands and tens of thousand hands which devotion once moved to dig the stone, to raise, and lay, and chisel them. Careless and thoughtless enough, undoubtedly, were the workmen, but they were set in motion by devout feeling, the feeling of those who poured out the money, and those who superintended the work, desiring to build a house of God. But listen to the cry now: You servant-man, you servant-girl, you journeyman, come here! here's a lottery ticket — only one dollar to pay — you can make so much by it, and help build a church besides! How can the holy Word be devoutly proclaimed in a building erected by an appeal to the covetousness of men? You smile. You think, perhaps, that it does no harm to the servant-man and servant-girl to lose the dollar; but I ask if it's no harm to their souls to be hoping for prizes in the lottery? And suppose a schedule of the lottery were laid in the corner-stone of the new building. Future generations would have harder work to decipher these figures, than we with the remains of the lake-dwellers. What sort of a race was this, they would say, which built a church with the profits of a lottery? Tetzel's hawking of indulgences was far less objectionable, for then they paid money for the pardon of their sins; the motive was a moral one, however much they may have been in error. But here ——"

"I had thought," Sonnenkamp interrupted, "that you considered beauty, the completion of the beautiful structure, as a sufficiently moral motive, just as any pagan would."

"I thank you for this suggestion, for it brings me to the point, to state it briefly, that it is a contradiction to make use of unholy means for a holy end, and nothing incongruous is truly beautiful."

Sonnenkamp was exceedingly charmed with this exposition, but Pranken, who saw that his prophecy in regard to the way in which Eric would proceed was altogether falsified, held his moustache thoughtfully between his fingers, and contracted his brows. He was stirred up, and doubly so,

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when he saw that Manna looked very attentive and serious. He would have been beside himself if he could have imagined what were her thoughts.

This heretic, Eric, would not have been able to reach a single dogma of her belief, with all his philosophy, for this was no lever with which to move the solid rock; but in this assault upon an apparently incidental matter, her confidence was shaken in the perfect moral beauty of the measures of those who were the representatives of the Spirit in the world. Everything which concerned religion was in her view fixed and unalterable, and just this thing troubled Manna, this insignificant trifle, that their object was money. She despised money, she regarded it as a dangerous enemy, and "money — money!" echoed and re-echoed within her. "Is gold the temptation?"

Pranken hastily summoned up his energies to say:—

"It strikes me as inconsiderate or immodest — excuse me if I do not use just the right word — I mean, he who is an unbeliever should not attack another's belief."

"Should we not?" replied Eric. "And still we are attacked. Humility is a virtue. Very true; and it is the virtue of a state of siege. We still stammer at the word of salvation. But is the child who cannot yet speak, on that account not to make known his wishes by cries? Lofty and noble to us is the religion of love, but love cannot be commanded, love is the genius of the heart; on the other hand, kindness, regard, active help can be commanded and guided; love, never. The great command, Love thy neighbor as thyself, has become hypocrisy; it is said, I love my neighbor, but I have nothing to do for him. Our doctrine says, Help thy neighbor as thyself. Love is a sort of musical susceptibility which can be counterfeited, but help cannot be. Therefore we apply more broadly the command, and say, Help thy neighbor as thyself. And you must do it yourself; for we stand upon the fundamental principle that there is no substitution in the realm of moral activity, and here it is the primal law that every one shall do guard-duty for himself."

"You've said that once before," Pranken interposed.

"True, and I shall often repeat it. I think that we have as good a right as our opponents, who are not always uttering some new truth. The sunlight of to-day is like that of yesterday——"

Here Roland burst in breathless, crying: "Eric, you must come at once, the field-guard is here; he is like a crazy man, and he says that you only can decide, and you alone shall decide."

"What has happened?"

"Sevenpiper has drawn the grand prize, and Claus says that the money belongs to him. Come, he's like one raving mad."

Eric went down to the courtyard.

There sat Claus upon a dog-kennel, and looked dolefully up at Eric and Roland. He spoke so thick and confusedly, that they could not make out distinctly what he meant; this only was plain, that Sevenpiper had drawn the prize, and Claus asserted that it belonged to him.

Sonnenkamp, Pranken, and Manna also made their appearance on the steps, and now Claus screamed out that Manna must bear testimony to having given him the money for the ticket, and he had simply forgotten to redeem it.

Eric quieted Claus, and promised to go with him to Sevenpiper. He asked permission of Sonnenkamp to have the horses harnessed. Roland was urgent to accompany him. Claus took a seat with the coachman on the box, and so they drove to the village to Sevenpiper's house.

They met the cooper in front of the house, and he told Eric that Sevenpiper had just turned him out of it. He said that he was in love with Sevenpiper's eldest daughter, and that this attachment had met the approval of the parents on both sides; but now Sevenpiper had shown him the door, saying that he could obtain a better match for his daughter, and that most assuredly he would not marry her to the son of Claus, who wanted to claim his property before the world.

"Is't true, father, that the prize belonged to you?"

"Yes, indeed; and it belongs to me still."

"So! Now I understand all about it," said the cooper, taking his departure.

In the house of Sevenpiper the newcomers found everything in confusion; the oldest daughter was weeping, and the other children were running over one another.

They became quieted at last, and Sevenpiper said that he was not going to allow himself to be driven out of his wits; anyhow he would no longer be a day-laborer in the vineyard; he would just do nothing for a year, and then he would see what he would take hold of. The children screamed and shouted in all sorts of ways, and Sevenpiper tried to make them sing, but not one of them was willing; all that was past and gone forever.

Eric had induced Claus to wait outside the house; he now told them what the field-guard wanted.

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As soon as he made known this desire, Sevenpiper raised the window and cried out to his former comrade standing in the road: —

"If you don't clear out from here, and if you claim a single red cent from me, I'll break every bone in your carcass. Now you know what to expect! Off with you!"

No appeal was of any use; Sevenpiper insisted upon it, that he would not give Claus as much as he could put into his eye.

Roland and Eric went away exceedingly cast down. They came to the house of Claus, who was asleep on the bench. His wife lamented that he had come home very drunk, and that the cooper was half-crazed.

Neither could Eric and Roland be of any assistance here.

On the way home, Roland seized Eric's hand and said: —

"Money! money! How speedily it can ruin people!"

Eric made no reply, and Roland continued: — "I never heard that there were any lotteries in America. You see, Eric, this is something that we have wholly to ourselves."

In silence, inwardly disturbed, they reached the villa. There seemed to be some ghost stalking abroad, for they could not shake off the remembrance that the demon of sudden riches had ruined two families; and immediately on waking the next morning, Roland said: —

"I should like to know how Claus and Sevenpiper will feel this morning, when they wake up."

A messenger was sent to the village, and they were gratified to hear that the two families were getting along comfortably again; but the eldest daughter of Sevenpiper had left her parents' house, and had gone to the field-guard's.

CHAPTER VII.

THE FIRST RIDE.

Manna was extremely gracious towards everybody, and no one would have suspected that this graciousness had pride for its basis. Every one appeared to her so poor, so forlorn, so trammelled! Whenever she was spoken to, her thought of the speaker was, "You, who say this, are but a child of the world;" and whenever she took part in any pleasure excursion, there was the perpetually recurring suggestion, "You yourself are not here, you only seem to be here, you are in a wholly different world, yonder, far above."

Every one was charmed with her friendliness, her gentleness, her attentive listening, and yet only a part of herself was really taken up with all this; she was elsewhere, and occupied with other interests.

No one ventured to exert any influence over her; but the Doctor agreed with Pranken and her father, that she must again ride on horseback.

A new world seemed to be disclosed; inside the house, there was singing, dancing, playing, and outside, too, all went merry as a marriage-bell. Manna took pleasant rides on horseback with Pranken, Eric, and Roland in the country round. Sonnenkamp also, mounted on his great black horse, frequently joined the party. Their ride was full of enjoyment, and they received on all sides marks of respect, not only from those who had been the recipients of benefits through the Professorin and Fräulein Milch, but also from those who were well off and independent in their circumstances. Wherever they alighted, and wherever they reined up, there was always some fresh proof of the pride which the whole region felt in such a man as Sonnenkamp.

One day, Manna, Pranken, and Roland, Eric and Sonnenkamp, were riding along the road bordered with nut-trees.

"Herr Dournay is right," exclaimed Manna, who was riding in advance with Pranken and her father.

Manna said that Eric had made the remark, that nut-trees were much more beautiful, and that it was a stupid and prosaic innovation to set out lindens and other common trees along the roads; that the nut-tree belonged to the Rhine, was beautiful and productive, and at least gave to the irrepressible boys a fine harvest time.

As she rode along she tore off a leaf of a nut-tree.

For some time her voice had been different; it was no longer as if veiled with tears. Turning to her father, she continued: —

"You can bring this about. Set out a nursery of nut-trees, and give to all the villages round as many nurslings as they can make use of."

Sonnenkamp promised to carry out the idea, and unfolded a plan which he had much at heart, of establishing general benevolent institutions, the first of which should be a fund for the widows and orphans of boatmen.

Manna stroked her beautiful white pony, to which she had given the name Snow-drop.

Pranken was happy that the horse proved itself worthy of its mistress, and voluntarily extending her hand, she thanked him for his care.

"Now trot, Snow-drop!" she cried, chirruping; and with Pranken on one side.

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and her father on the other, she rode boldly, rising in the saddle.

They now came in sight of an advancing procession. Manna reined in so suddenly that she would have been thrown over her horse's head, had not Sonnenkamp held her by her riding-habit. They dismounted, and Roland and Eric were also obliged to dismount. The grooms led the horses, and Manna walked with the procession. Holding up her long riding-dress, not proudly, but humbly, she sang aloud with the pilgrims, and Pranken also. Eric was silent.

At a chapel by the way-side Manna knelt down, and Pranken also knelt by her side. When she arose, she was amazed to see that the rest had gone, leaving Pranken and her together. They were waiting in a pathway through the field, not far off, with the grooms who were holding the horses. The procession moved on, and Pranken and Manna were left alone. The murmur of the pilgrims was heard in the distance. Pranken held his hands folded together, and looked at Manna as if praying.

"Manna," he began, he had never called her Manna before. "Manna, such is to be our life! We acknowledge the grace of heaven, that we, possessed of wealth and inheriting noble names, can occupy a lofty position, but are ready every moment to unite ourselves with our brothers and sisters who walk the holy paths in coarse shoes and barefoot, and to put ourselves on a level with them. Manna, thus will we live!"

He took her hand, which she allowed him to hold an instant, and then drew it away. He continued: —

"I have never yet told you that I too have wrestled with the holy resolution to renounce the world, and to assume the priestly vow. You also, elevated and pious, have struggled, and have returned to the world. I place my heart, my soul, my soul's salvation in your hand. Here, on this consecrated spot, come with me into the chapel." He seized her hand, and at the same moment, Eric cried: —

"Fräulein Manna!"

"What's the matter? What do you want?" exclaimed Pranken.

"Fräulein Manna, your father wants me to tell you that yonder is a boundary-stone convenient for you to mount your horse."

"I shall not ride again, I shall walk back to the house," replied Manna; and turning round, whether she knew that Pranken was not following her, or did not know it, she went on with Eric. After they had gone some distance, turning round she saw Pranken still standing motionless in the place, and she called to him to come with them.

In spite of all urging, she would not mount her horse, but walked the whole distance in her heavy riding-dress.

She said nothing; there was a strange look of defiance in her countenance.

She locked herself in her room, and wept and prayed for a long time.

The struggle had come sooner than she thought, and she seemed to herself all unarmed. Pranken had a right to address her in that way. And would it not be better that she should enter into life? At this thought she looked around, as if she must ask Eric what he thought of this conclusion, what opinion he would form of this fickleness. Again she looked around, and it seemed to her that Eric had come into the room with her, and still she was alone.

It was a severe conflict, and only this one point was gained, that she would no longer allow herself to be robbed of herself by such distractions.

A boat-sail upon the Rhine had been appointed for the evening. Manna, who had promised to go, now positively declined. She stood at the window of her silent chamber without opening it, and she wished that it was grated. She saw the gentlemen and the ladies go down to the river, and heard Lina singing a beautiful song accompanied by a fine manly voice.

Who is that?

It is not Pranken, nor Roland; it can be no other than Eric.

On the boat, Lina requested Eric to sing the "Harper's Song," set to music by Schubert. Eric considered it entirely inappropriate to sing aloud here, in a joyous company upon the Rhine, the plaint of a sorely burdened soul breathed out to the lonely night.

But Lina persisted, and Eric sang, —

"He that with tears did never eat his bread."

The rowers stopped rowing, and Eric's voice thrilled the inmost soul. He paused, and then sang the words, —

"Ye lead us onward into life. Ye leave
The wretch to fall; then yield him up, in woe,
Remorse, and pain, unceasingly to grieve;
For every sin is punished here below."

Schubert's air closes without any musical cadence, just as Goethe's words give no final solution. The strain, "For every sin is punished here below," filled the air as the boat glided past the villa. Manna heard the words, sank down, and covered her face with both hands.

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Hour after hour passed away, and then some one knocked at the door. Manna waked from the sleep into which she had fallen in the midst of her anguish. It was quite dark. Roland and Lina were calling her name. Overcome by weariness of body and soul, Manna had not been able to keep from falling asleep, and now she joined the rest of the family, as if in a dream. It seemed to her as if it were morning, and yet it was night. She had a feeling of oppression in the society of those around her, all of whom looked upon her with loving eyes.

In order, as it were, to recover self-possession, she proposed another sail upon the Rhine by moonlight, and she asked Lina to sing.

Lina rejoined that she could not sing so beautifully as Eric, and that he ought to sing.

"Do sing," Manna said to him. "I cannot sing now," Eric replied.

The first request she had ever made of him he positively refused to grant. Manna was vexed at first, and then she was glad of this lack of friendliness. It is better thus; there is no reason why he should interest you in any way; you must again take the proper position in regard to him. And in order to show that she did not feel hurt by the refusal, she was more animated than she had ever been before.

When they returned from the excursion, Sonnenkamp met them as they were getting out of the boat, and told them that Sevenpiper had informed him, lest they should be taken by surprise, or be away — but no one was to know anything about it — that he was to be waited upon by the boatmen to-morrow evening, to thank him for the benevolent institution he had established.

CHAPTER VIII.

THOU SHALT LAUGH, DANCE, AND DRINK.

"A HOUSE without a daughter is like a meadow without flowers," said the Major, who was watching, with Sonnenkamp and the Professorin, the young people playing graces in the lawn between the villa and the green cottage.

Lina had induced Manna to be present, and she was there in a bright summer suit. And Lina, together with the maid, had prevailed upon Manna to wear a deep red velvet ribbon in her black hair, and that her rich dark hair should be shown to the best advantage.

The young people formed a large circle, sending differently colored hoops swiftly through the air, and catching them upon the pretty sticks.

The Architect was present, too, having been invited at Manna's special request. No one except herself and Lina knew why this had been done.

Roland had requested Eric to join in the play; at first he declined, but Lina cried, —

"Whoever doesn't play wears a wig and is afraid of its being found out."

He made one of the circle. Pranken gave him a sort of military salute with his stick, as if it were a sword. They laughed merrily as they sprang about on the lawn, and it was a delight to the eye to witness Roland's, and, still more, Manna's graceful movements. When she looked up and reached out an arm, with her lithe and ethereal form, it appeared as if her eyes were fixed upon something else than the play; as if she were in an ecstasy, and were expecting not a hoop, but some heavenly vision. Pranken stood on her right, and Eric on her left; Pranken threw so skilfully that she always caught the hoop from him, while Eric sent it too high or too low, so that she was obliged to stoop and pick it up from the ground. It almost seemed as if he did it purposely, for in this movement Manna's grace was always displayed afresh.

Roland and Lina made fun of his clumsy play.

Lina and Roland kept up a constant running fight; she struggled with the boy as if she were a boy herself, and they tried to throw each other down in the endeavor to catch a hoop tossed beyond the circle. But Roland was not thrown down, and escaped from all her clutches as smoothly as a weasel. The Architect smiled as he looked at Lina's fawn-colored gaiter-boots. As Eric was leaping forward to catch a hoop which Manna had thrown on one side, he fell his whole length on the lawn.

Manna laughed outright.

As soon as Lina heard it she clapped her hands, exclaiming, —

"The princess is set free! Manna has, heretofore, been the princess who couldn't laugh. Captain, you've broken the spell! What name shall we give to the knight who has set our Manna free?"

Lina was overflowing with merriment, and she might indeed take pride in having been the means of enlivening the whole house, and, more than all, Manna.

Eric succeeded in turning his fall into a joke, and he was at a loss, when he looked at his mother, to know why she shook her head so strangely. He had entirely forgotten how she reminded him with pride during those sad days when Bella was visiting the villa, that his father had said he had never had a fall.

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Manna's cheeks had never before glowed so brightly as they did to-day; the spell upon her seemed broken; one deep, hearty, childlike burst of laughter had given her new life. She was sorely vexed, but she could make no suitable response when Lina said to Herr Sonnenkamp:—

"Your Highness! The king was obliged to give the princess in marriage to the knight who made her laugh, and public proclamation was made of it from the tower of the castle throughout all lands. Now say what you will give to Herr Dournay."

"I grant him a kiss," answered Sonnenkamp.

"Herr Dournay, you are authorized to kiss Manna, her father grants permission," Lina called out to the company.

They all stood amazed, and Sonnenkamp cried:—

"No, child, that was not my meaning. He can give you a kiss."

"I don't need your permission for that," replied Lina.

She was now entirely in her element; wherever there was any fun, any teasing, she seemed a different being, quick, inventive, excessively merry, full of fanciful suggestions; as soon, however, as the conversation took a serious turn, she always sat very quiet and attentive, but her look said:—

"All this is no doubt very fine, but I've no relish for it; I've never yet seen that people were any better off or any merrier for all their smart speeches."

They returned to the villa.

Lina had hung her hat upon a bush. The Architect carried it to her, stroking the brown ribbons, and regarding fondly the brown straw braid, and the artificial vine-leaves, of a brown autumnal tint. He handed the hat to Lina, and while doing it they pressed each other's hands, as the Architect said that he must go to the castle again, in order to make some arrangements for the next day. For an instant only, Lina looked thoughtfully after him, and then, giving her head a toss, she bounded up the steps and went into the music saloon. Placing herself at the piano, she played a dancing tune, for the day must be wound off with a dance; the release of the princess who had not been able to laugh must be celebrated with a dance, and Lina was so self-denying as to be willing herself to play. When Pranken now came up to Manna and jestingly invited her to dance, Lina jumped up from the piano.

"No, that won't do! The knight of philosophy gone to grass; he who freed the princess, he must come first."

Lina would not have it otherwise. Manna had first to dance with Eric, and the Aunt was obliging enough to play for them, so that Lina could dance too. With a very roguish, saucy courtesy, she challenged Herr von Pranken, who took her arm without any hesitation, and danced with her behind Eric and Manna.

"I can't realize that I am dancing," said Manna, as she floated rather than danced round the great hall.

"Nor can I," replied Eric.

Manna broke the pause which ensued, by saying:—

"Lina sets us all crazy."

Pranken now came and asked her to dance; she was still somewhat out of breath. He held her hand until he began to whirl with her in the dance. Roland was delighted that Lina was free, and the Aunt must still keep playing for him to dance with Lina, as he was unwilling to stop.

Sonnenkamp was quite happy as he stood there in the music-saloon; and he said to the Professorin that this was all so pleasant, and he had never thought that he should see his children dancing in this hall. He had sent to Frau Ceres, who would like to be a looker on, too. She came, and Pranken and Manna must dance again in her presence.

Sonnenkamp praised the happy suggestion of his wife, that she should give a grand ball in honor of Manna; but Manna decidedly opposed this, and the wise Lina, happy in her triumph, begged the parents in a low tone not to urge Manna any further to-day, and she would bring everything about in good season.

After tea, Lina wanted to have another dance; she would like to keep up all night, and that Sonnenkamp should telegraph to the garrison to have the military band sent by an extra train.

She was to-day so full of buoyant sprightliness, and so overflowing with cheerfulness, that even Eric, who had heretofore regarded her with indifference, approached her in a very friendly mood.

"Yes," she said, "do you remember that time? Would you have believed that you should ever have danced with your winged apparation? Isn't she a heavenly creature? Ah, and if you ever know her as she used to be, so full of glee! Ah, I am delighted to think that you will fall so deeply in love with Manna,—oh, so deeply in love,—so dead in love. Will you promise me something?"

"What, for instance?"

"That you will tell me the very first day when you fall in love."

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"But if I should fall in love with you, what then?"

"Come, don't talk so. I am much too stupid for you. I should have been smart enough for Herr von Pranken, but I am engaged, and out of the question. Hasn't Manna told you anything about me?"

Eric said she had not, and Lina continued:—

"Yes, do this, do it out of regard for me, and snatch Manna away from Baron von Pranken. I beg of you, do it for my sake."

"What are you laughing at so merrily?" said Manna, coming up to them. "I have begun to laugh to-day, and now I should like to keep you company."

"Tell her," said Lina with a nod. As Eric was silent, she continued:—

"He can tell you, but he is awfully reserved and profound. Don't let him have any peace, Manna, until he has told you. Herr Captain, if you don't tell at once, then I'll tell."

"I have that confidence in your sense of propriety," said Eric very seriously, "that I do not believe you would wantonly turn a joke into sober earnest."

Lina's whole mien changed, and she said:

"Ah, Manna, he is so awfully learned! My father says so too, and he sees people through and through. Don't you sometimes feel afraid of him?"

Without making any reply, Manna took Lina's arm and went with her through the garden, Lina chatting, joking, and singing incessantly, like a nightingale in the shrubbery.

After Manna had gone to her room, it seemed to her there that the pictures on the wall looked at her and asked: Who can this be? She shut out the dumb pictures by closing her eyes, threw herself upon her knees, and a voice within her seemed to say: It must be thus; thou art to become acquainted with the world, and all the vain delights of life, in order to gain the victory over them. Yet she felt down-hearted, for in the midst of her contrite prayer she seemed to hear the lively waltzes sounding in her ears, and she heard a burst of laughter. Could it have been she herself who had so laughed?

The next day she had to enter into fresh gaieties.

In the afternoon they drove to the castle, and there the Architect contrived a new delight. He was a genuine priest of the May-bowl, and with a sort of solemnity he mixed the various ingredients of the fragrant beverage. The whole company sat upon a projecting wall of the castle, and looked out upon the broadly-extending landscape, while Lina, in her exuberant joyousness, sang and caroled without intermission. She sang in the open air, as a general thing, better than in a room; and she had a good accompaniment, for she sang a duett with the Architect.

Eric was again asked to sing, and again he declined.

Lina induced Manna to drink a whole glass of May-wine, and said, in joke, that if she could only get Manna once a little intoxicated, the old Manna, or, more properly, the young Manna, would again show herself. She seemed ready to make her appearance, but Manna had strength enough to hold herself in restraint, though she laughed to-day at Lina's most trifling jokes.

Roland nodded to Eric, but he whispered to him that he must not call attention to Manna's cheerfulness, as that would put an end to it.

Wreaths were woven, and Lina recalled the time when Eric first came to Wolfsgarten; with wreaths on their heads they all drove from the castle back to the villa.

At the last declivity, Manna bounded lightly down the hill and Lina after her; at the foot the latter embraced her old schoolmate, saying to her:—

"You are released! You have done the three best things in the world; you have laughed, danced, and drunk—no, this is not the best; the best is yet to come."

And again Manna burst into a ringing laugh.

CHAPTER IX.

DEMONSTRATION OF RESPECT FROM BELOW.

When a person is to be surprised in the evening by a demonstration of respect, what does he do in the morning?

Sonnenkamp must pretend not to notice anything, but nevertheless, he watched the barometer very closely. It had been raining, and now the mercury was rising; it is clearing off, and the proposed demonstration will come off beautifully. If one only knew beforehand the address which would be made this evening, one could get ready a suitable response. Princes have the advantage of receiving beforehand any address that is to be presented. Sonnenkamp, however, was confident that the occasion would suggest to him a suitable reply. He had never regarded the honor that comes from men; he had honored himself, so far as there is any need of honor at all. Should he now feel any concern about it? And by what was this respect obtained?

By money!

Had he not a superfluity of that? it was

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very evident that their eyes would not be turned upon him.

He rode out at the usual hour, but he did not follow his usual route, and without being aware of it, he cast amiable glances upon all the people he met; he had a new accession of benevolent feeling. He rode to the castle, and looked smilingly around, involuntarily fancying to himself with what delight the knights formerly returned home from their raids; they were strong, fierce, courageous men.

Not far from the ruins he turned aside into the wood, for he saw that a large flag was floating over the battlements of the only completed tower, and there were no men visible. He wandered about in the wood, leading his horse by the bridle. He himself could not have told what there passed through his mind. Here walks a man in the wood, silent, alone, lost in thought, and this evening hundreds and hundreds of men will honor him with cheers.

The Major lay in wait for him as he was returning, and insisted upon his going home with him. The Major had the air of a groomsman, who has made every preparation for the wedding, and now, confident that all the requisite arrangements have been made, retires with the bridegroom into the quiet apartment until he shall be summoned by the full band.

The dinner to-day was not so well served as usual, but Sonnenkamp took no notice of it, not wanting to show that he knew of the preparations for the evening celebration.

In the afternoon there were present the neighbouring families of the Cabinetsrath, the Justice and his wife, the Doctor, and the Major, who had absented himself for a brief period and now appeared with all his decorations. Many others came also; even the young widow, the daughter of Herr von Endlich, was there, in her widow's weeds, having come to spend a few weeks in the summer with her parents in the country. Pranken had invited the best society in the vicinity, for he knew that this public recognition of his renown was very agreeable to Herr Sonnenkamp. All were present, however, as if by accident, and Sonnenkamp allowed this tacitly understood lie to pass.

Pranken was particularly attentive to the beautiful young widow, and made the most of his position as son of the house. He was glad, as he once caught Manna's glance, that she had an opportunity of perceiving what temptations and charms were offered to him; and the words which he made use of in introducing Manna to the young widow seemed to him very well chosen. He said, —

"You, gracious lady, and Fräulein Sonnenkamp are just fitted to be friends; for Fräulein Sonnenkamp has also a maturity of mind far beyond her years."

The young widow was very gracious to Manna, and Pranken left them by themselves, for he had a great deal to attend to as son of the house.

He had given orders to the cook to have in readiness an ample provision of roast meats and common wines, and he had looked out also for the cigars. Sonnenkamp knew everything that was going on, but pretended to see and hear nothing.

When evening came, Pranken, in presence of all, requested the father — such was the word he made use of emphatically — to remain in his room until he should be sent for. Very modestly, bashfully, and indulgently, Sonnenkamp betook himself to his room.

Long tables were now set in the courtyard, and food and drink were spread upon them, for the boats fastened together and gondolas were already coming down from the upper Rhine, and music was heard in the distance. The boats arranged themselves in front of the villa.

When it was dark, torches and parti-colored lamps, like a garland of fire, were hung upon the vessels.

Sonnenkamp was alone in his room, and he was continually trying to imagine what sort of an address would be made to him, and he repeated half aloud to himself his reply.

Approaching footsteps were now heard, and the Major and the Justice made their appearance. The Major said that they would bear him company for a while, and the Justice added that it must certainly touch him very deeply, for he would be obliged to be an actual witness of the gratitude which the hearts of so many people, struggling for the means of living, felt towards him. Sonnenkamp expressed his thanks, and smoked away quietly, holding his cigar very tenderly, as if he felt bashful even in its presence.

He begged his friends to excuse him for not being able to entertain them; that he had lived so many years abroad, and now it almost overwhelmed him to have found a home in so many staunch hearts; and he did not deserve it, for he had given nothing but a little wretched money. The Justice wanted to make a reply, but the Major nodded to him to omit it. In such moments, he whispered to him, a man must be expected to make some extravagant speeches, and it is sufficient to listen quietly to what he says; and besides, he saw that

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Sonnenkamp was conning over the speech which he was soon to get off.

Several heavy footsteps were now heard, and Pranken said, opening the door, —

"This way, my men."

A deputation of boatmen entered, headed by Sevenpiper, and he begged Sonnenkamp to be so kind as to allow them to present to him a tribute of their grateful respect. With eyes cast down, and as if weighed down by the burden of honor heaped upon him, amidst the boatmen dressed in their light-colored clothes, Sonnenkamp went down the steps into the park.

Here a beautiful scene presented itself to his view. The boatmen were standing in the boats illuminated by differently colored lights, and singing in chorus a song which sounded on the distant air. Sonnenkamp stood there with folded hands, looking straight before him; and then he separated his hands, and rubbed the ring on the thumb of his right hand, which pained him. The song ended, and a cheer was called for in honor of the great benefactor. The cannons roared, and the reports were echoed and re-echoed from the mountains, so that it was proclaimed through the land as with a voice of thunder up the river and down.

Sonnenkamp returned his thanks in a brief but hearty speech; Roland stood at his right hand and Manna at his left. He placed his right hand upon the shoulder of his son, by this means hiding the thumb, and with the other hand he took Manna's; he concluded with the request that the good neighbors would be pleased to extend their kindness also to his children.

A lad, who was standing at the helm, wearing the clothes which Roland had sent him on his birthday, now called for a cheer for Roland; again the cannons fired. Roland said to the Major: I cannot make a speech. He went down, and got on board the boat and shook hands with the men; and he now perceived, for the first time, that Eric was on the boat. He sat behind the others and had assisted them in singing; the school-teacher, Fassbender, was sitting with him.

They all now came on shore. The boatmen, with a band of music, marched through the park to the tables that had been spread for their entertainment. Sonnenkamp immediately gave orders, and in a sharp tone, that the chairs should be removed.

"It isn't necessary for them to sit down," said he to Pranken; "I had imagined you would have thought of that. Have them out of the way soon. You can't trust these common people, they soon get out of order. Let the wine be taken on board the boats, and there they may get as crazy as they please."

At the first glass Sevenpiper proposed the health of Frau Sonnenkamp, and Sonnenkamp returned thanks in her behalf from the outside steps, and expressed his regret that his wife, on account of illness, could not be present. He begged them to be as quiet as possible, for she was very sensitive. A damper was thus put upon the merriment, and Eric led the men back to the boats. They took their departure, the cannons roared, the music struck up, and then all was again still at the villa.

They sat in a friendly circle in the grand saloon, and Sonnenkamp looked more used up than he had ever been before; his features lighted up, however, when the Major, who had a happy thought, said, —

"This must all be reported by a good hand in the newspaper! You, Comrade," turning to Eric, "you will certainly do it up finely. Not a word; you must."

Eric explained that he had no intention of refusing; he had only wanted to do of his own accord what the Major had suggested. The Major gave him a violent grip of the hand, and did not drop it until Eric said, —

"If you squeeze my hand any longer, I shall not be able to write to-morrow."

The Major went to Eric's mother, and commended him for having sung with the people; he only regretted that Fräulein Milch had not been a spectator of the beautiful celebration, but she was stiff-necked in regard to everything connected with the Sonnenkamp house. He could not imagine why it was; she was in every other respect so kind towards everybody.

The Professorin knew why Fräulein Milch stayed away, and it gave her a severe twinge, that she herself had to be present, and that her son was to proclaim the fame of this man, who, in all that he did, had an entirely different end in view from what Eric imagined. She looked at the man, at his children, and at the whole company, and could not help thinking how it would be, if, instead of these salutes of cannon in his honor that now echoed in the night, a wholly different report should be heard over mountain and valley.

The company at last departed. Roland and Eric accompanied the Mother home. Roland was brimful of joy over this tribute of universal respect, and Eric took care to impress upon him again how great a happiness it was, to be able so to make other people happy. Roland spoke of the intention of his father to set out walnut trees through-

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out the whole region, and complained that he himself seemed to be like Alexander of Macedon, who found fault with his father, Philip, for leaving nothing for him to do. The Mother and Eric rejoiced at this awakened zeal of the youth, and when he took leave, the Mother shed tears as she kissed him.

"What was the matter with your mother, that she was so sad all the evening?" said Roland, as they were returning home.

"She has lost the key-note of joy," replied Eric.

That very night he wrote a spirited account of the benevolent Institution, and the cheerful festivities, and sent it to Professor Crutius at the capital. The next day but one, the journal came to the villa. Sonnenkamp thanked Eric for his well-written communication, and Roland begged, —

"Give me the paper; I will keep it for a perpetual remembrance. I am so glad that I am going to be a soldier. If I win battles, it will be published in the papers, and the scholars will be obliged to hear of my name, and of my deeds, just like those of Miltiades, and Washington, and Napoleon."

There was another communication published in the official gazette, and Pranken did not deny that he was the author of it. What Eric had written was every way fine, but this communication came to the eyes of the Prince, and so was of far greater importance, and soon showed its results.

CHAPTER X.

THE VICTORIA REGIA IN BLOOM.

The Cabinetsräthin proved herself to be grateful and well informed; she showed to Sonnenkamp a letter from her husband, in which he stated that the Prince had read with great satisfaction the account of the Institution and the popular celebration. But a much more important point was, that the Prince expressed the intention of paying a visit in person to the famous green-houses and fruit-plantations of Sonnenkamp. This must be kept a profound secret, but it was very proper that Sonnenkamp should be informed of it. He sent back the request that the visit of the Prince should be announced by a telegram.

He seemed to himself now a prisoner in his own domains. He had had no idea of leaving the villa until it was time for him to set out for the Baths, but now it seemed to him that he might be called suddenly away, and the Prince would be sure to come during his absence.

He gave precise orders, and promised a special remuneration for the speediest forwarding of any telegram from the capital; but day after day passed, and none came. Everything had resumed its quiet routine, but Sonnenkamp was constantly in a state of feverish excitement. Pranken wanted to go away, but remained at Sonnenkamp's request, who imparted to him, in the strictest confidence, what distinguished visitors he was expecting.

Pranken endured very patiently Manna's aversion to any decided advances towards intimacy; he was glad to perceive that she treated Eric with special coolness, for after those days of harmless and merry enjoyment, she had withdrawn into her life of strict penitential seclusion; and if she chanced to meet Eric, her countenance at once became darkened.

Sonnenkamp went through the park, the orchard and the green-houses, and would have been glad to beseech all the plants to be in a beautiful and a fresh condition when their Highnesses arrived; and his old predilection for grubbing in the earth with his sack-like garment was indulged with great circumspection.

He was sitting in the hot-house, and saying to himself how very quiet he would be, if the Prince, as was scarcely to be doubted, should bring into the house his diploma of nobility. And as he thus sat meditating with himself, there was a strange rustling in the air; a gentle, scarcely perceptible crackling was noticed, and Sonnenkamp cried out, —

"It has burst open!"

The Victoria Regia had bloomed. He saw the flower, he took delight in it, and yet he shook his head in vexation. Why couldst thou not wait, and open at the very instant when the Prince was standing here? One ought to be able to compel nature! That would be the thing!

He sent a carriage immediately for the Cabinetsräthin, and she came. She found the whole family, Frau Ceres included, in amazement at the sight of the wonderful flower; and she too was enraptured.

Sonnenkamp explained to her that the Victoria Regia was white when it first bloomed, and closed its flower at night; that during the second night it opened again, and was then of a rose-color. For four days a new flower appeared each day, and the former flower sank down under water.

He took the Cabinetsräthin aside; she must immediately inform the Court of the event. Now there was a special inducement for the Prince to come.

At evening, the tidings were sent that the Prince and the Princess were coming the next day; but they would take it very ill, if

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any one should give it to be understood that this was anything more than a mere casual visit.

Sonnenkamp heaved a deep sigh; if all was to appear accidental, then the Prince would not bring with him the patent of a nobility, for that required previous preparat on, many formalities, and sessions of the Commission on Orders. But perhaps all that was a matter of secrecy, which the Cabinetsräthin was not allowed to disclose.

The well-posted neighbor did not consider this probable, and so Sonnenkamp's peculiar satisfaction in all this was utterly destroyed. Then one must keep doing forever some new thing, must wait, and use fresh exertions. He was so vexed, that he feared he should be uncivil to the Prince. He impressed upon himself the necessity of the greatest self-control that no vexation and impatience should appear.

In the morning, after an almost sleepless night, Sonnenkamp issued directions that no one should leave the house on that day, and in a measure commanded Frau Ceres not to be sick. He went to the Professorin and begged her to do the honors of the house, confessing to her whom he was expecting, and saying that he could have no secrets with her.

The Professorin shuddered all over, and her look said: —

"You dare to tell me that, when I know——"

But she restrained herself, and placed herself at the disposal of Herr Sonnenkamp.

He waited in the garden in front of the green cottage until the Professorin had changed her dress; and she wore to-day, for the first time, a miniature in pastel of her deceased husband. She accompanied Sonnenkamp to the villa, and Frau Ceres was exceedingly surprised to see her at so unusual an hour.

The Professorin had obtained permission to inform Frau Ceres of the expected visit, and the lady wished to deck herself with all her jewels. It was very hard to convince her that she ought to be dressed with great simplicity.

A telegram from the Cabinetsräthin at the capital informed them that the royal party had set out.

It was now a matter of certainty. Eric, Roland, and Manna were also informed, and Eric wished to remain in his room.

"Perhaps you expect to be summoned?" said Pranken sharply.

"I expect nothing but civility, where I am not aware of having done anything to offend," replied Eric, courteously.

Pranken tossed his head slightly; he had, in fact, fully made up his mind: This person must be off; the man is becoming a nuisance; but this tutor's family have nestled themselves in here, like caterpillars in a bee-hive, and there's nothing to be done but smoke them out.

Pranken was the only one who was composed and self-possessed; he was the chamberlain and the Baron von Pranken, and all the rest were nothing but wretched underlings.

Manna especially was restless; and today, for the first time, she was confidential towards Pranken.

She expressed her satisfaction that the whole household had such a noble support to lean upon.

Pranken was freshly inspirited by these words.

"You will like being at Court," he said to Manna.

And Sonnenkamp, who was standing not far off, added immediately: —

"Yes, my child, you will receive delight and honor at the side of the most honored and most beloved nobleman."

Manna cast down her eyes. Then Roland came up, dressed completely in white.

"Just see how handsome he is," said Manna to Pranken.

Roland was full of confidence, and exhorted Manna not to be so timid: their royal Highnesses were very gracious, and after the first words, one had the feeling that he was with his own comrades.

Lootz was stationed on the flat roof of the house to look out, and now he came hurriedly down, exclaiming: —

"They are coming!"

They separated as if no one was expected.

Two carriages drove into the courtyard. Sonnenkamp hastened down the outside steps, but stumbled on the lowest one, and had to hold on by the railing.

What is the meaning of this?

A black face!

Where does this come from?

"Come! Come!" cried Pranken, who was hurrying after him. "Their royal Highnesses are already getting up."

He reached the carriage at just the right moment, and had the honor of being able to take the hand of the Prince as he was getting out of the carriage. The Princess got out at the other side, with Pranken's assistance, and expressed in gracious words how much satisfaction she took in being able for once to see the place, and the man in his own house, whence proceeded so much

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that was excellent and beneficent to the people.

The Princess, who cherished a special zeal for the benevolent institutions of the land, considered herself bound to express her thanks for Sonnenkamp's generous expenditures. She would have preferred that he should have devoted his munificent outlays to institutions already established by her, instead of founding new ones. It was a decided oversight of Pranken's not to have taken that into consideration.

There was a slight tone of dissatisfaction in the remark of the Princess, that she was always glad when new institutions were founded.

Frau Ceres had approached, accompanied by Manna.

The Princess addressed a few words to Frau Ceres, and then said to Manna that she looked wholly different from her brother, except that her eyes were like his.

"But where is Roland?"

He was now seen coming down the steps; he was urgently requesting Eric to go with him, while Eric and the Mother bade him go alone.

He obeyed, and was welcomed by their royal Highnesses in a very cordial manner.

The Prince went towards the house, where the Professorin was standing on the steps with Eric; he went up to her with quick step, holding out both hands, and saying how glad he was to see her again; then, pointing to the miniature, he added that he cherished a most grateful remembrance of its subject, and wore his image not on but in his breast. Eric seemed to be hardly noticed, till a glance from his mother said, "Speak to my son," and the Prince turned to him with the words: —

"I hope, dear Dournay, that you have a better pupil than your excellent father had in me."

Eric found nothing to say in reply, but bowed in silence. Pranken approached, and asked: —

"Will your Highness see the Park and the Victoria Regia in bloom first, or the house?"

"Ask the Princess," was the answer.

Pranken moved with great deference towards the other group, catching Manna's bright glance, which followed him everywhere. Where was Eric now? There stood the poor fellow, and it was laughable to think of his daring to aspire to an equality with a Pranken.

The Princess said that, after her drive, she would prefer to go into the house first.

They repaired to the balcony room, where a breakfast stood ready, and Sonnenkamp had the audacity to beg their Highnesses to accept with favor such a simple and extempore repast as a commoner could offer them.

Frau Ceres was favored with a seat at the Prince's right hand, and the Professorin was seated at his left; the Princess sat between Sonnenkamp and Roland.

Eric was fortunate enough to find, among the gentlemen in attendance, a former comrade to converse with.

"You must enter the military school soon," said the Prince, addressing Roland.

Sonnenkamp looked fixedly at him; the Prince knew very well when Roland was to enter, and every moment Sonnenkamp expected to see a sign given to one of the chamberlains to hand him his patent of nobility, but it did not come. The Prince talked very earnestly with the Professorin, expressing his regret that a lady of such rare spiritual and mental endowments should have withdrawn from Court.

They soon rose from the table, and Sonnenkamp was made happy by the Prince's praise of his green-house and park, and his skilful fruit culture. Suddenly, in the orchard, the Prince asked the Professorin: —

"Where is your sister-in-law, the beautiful Claudine?"

"She is close by; she lives with me in the house in which Herr Sonnenkamp has established us."

"We will call upon her," said the Prince, abruptly; and they went through the new gate, across the meadows, to the green cottage.

The Aunt was very much surprised, but retained her quiet self-possession. The Prince told her that he could never think of harp-playing without at the same time thinking of Fräulein Claudine; one of the pleasantest recollections of his youth was of seeing and hearing her, as she sat with her long curls, on a tabouret in his mother's room; it was the prettiest bit of romance among his childish memories. Then again he expressed his gratitude to the sister of his teacher, and extolled Herr Sonnenkamp's good fortune in having two such noble ladies as neighbors.

The Prince sincerely desired to make people happy, and he believed that he could do so with his porcelain flowers of speech; he was perfectly convinced that from this day forth Aunt Claudine would feel an unexampled satisfaction and happiness.

He remained a long time at the cottage, and gave orders that the carriages should follow him, that they might start from there on their return.

Eric, who had not been asked to join the party, remained behind at the villa, and

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talked with a tall coal-black negro, named Adams.

The negro, who wore a fantastic livery, soon became confidential, and said that he had been a member of a circus company, and was much applauded for his bold leaps, and his extraordinary strength; the brother of the Prince, when travelling in America, had bought his freedom, and he was now the Prince's favorite footman. His only trouble was that his wife, a white woman who had loved him dearly, and his child were dead, and he should never get another wife.

Eric had never before spoken to a man who had been a slave, and he could not help saying how much it moved him to do so.

While Eric was talking with the negro, he little thought that he was being talked of in the green cottage; his aunt resolutely turned the conversation upon him, and told the Prince what a man he had become. As the guests were about to enter their carriage, the Prince said, in quite a loud voice, to the Professorin: —

"Where is your son? Tell him that I should be very glad to prove to him how well I remember our boyish companionship."

The Princess' party drove off. The tall negro, who was sitting behind the carriage, gazed back for a long time. Sonnenkamp was much out of temper, and said to Pranken that this visit from the Prince had taken an incomprehensible turn, which he could not understand; he was unused to such things. It was clear that it had left him in most decided ill-humor.

When they returned to the villa, Manna went to Eric and said,—

"The Prince left a special message for you with your mother, and you are to remember that you were his comrade in boyhood."

Eric answered with frank cordiality:—

"The only gratifying circumstance about the Prince's gracious message, Fräulein Manna, is, that you bring it to me."

All looked surprised at this friendly dialogue between Eric and Manna. Pranken ground his teeth, and clenched his fists at the ready audacity of the tutor.

"Where have you been?" asked Sonnenkamp, in a tone of reproof.

"I have been talking with the Prince's servant."

Sonnenkamp gave him a peculiar look, and then went to his green-house.

Pranken announced that he must now take his departure; he evidently expected Manna to raise some opposition, but she said nothing. So he rode off, leaving a strange feeling of disturbance behind him at the villa.

CHAPTER II.

DEMONSTRATION OF RESPECT FROM ABOVE.

A FLASH of lightning in the night-sky makes us fully conscious of the darkness, and our eyes are blinded. So it was after the departure of the Prince and Princess; every one sought to avoid the eye of another, every one went his own way, but no one spoke out his vexation and disappointment more frankly than the valet Joseph, and the steward agreed with him; the latter could not say much, because his mouth was full of the delicacies which had been removed from the table, but he nodded silently, and became very red in the face. Joseph said:—

"Not to leave a single gratuity behind them! What is there left of the whole show? Nothing; and at Court there isn't a table better laid and served, or more handsomely provided. They ought to be ashamed of themselves! Not to leave a single penny for the servants!"

Such was the fact.

No one, except Aunt Claudine, of whom nobody had thought, could find any good reason for satisfaction.

Sonnenkamp pondered and speculated how he could have brought about the change in the Prince's gracious mood. His inmost soul rebelled against being so dependent on the whim or the glance of another — he, the man who had ruled so absolutely over all that came in his way. He tormented himself till his head burned, to think over the whole course of the visit, and at last he thought he had found out the trouble; it was only a hitch at a glove which had shown it, but that was doubtless the sign of annoyance. He had told the Prince how delighted he should be to drink new health from the same spring as his gracious highness, and, when the Prince looked at him inquiringly, he had added that he also was going to Carlsbad, where he should have the happiness of beholding his Prince's face every day. Yes, that was it; the Prince had cast a hasty glance of astonishment upon him, and given his glove a twitch.

Sonnenkamp acknowledged to himself that he had made a decided blunder in not using more reserve; for nothing of the Prince's journey to the Baths was yet officially announced, and his mentioning it had been premature, and showed some private source of information. He was more vexed at the caution and self-restraint that one was compelled to observe, than at his own want of tact. Could not the Prince have taken it pleasantly? Had not a good, and,

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as he himself thought, a most graceful turn been given to his allusion?

The thoughts of the self-tormentor went further, and new tokens appeared. Had not the Prince said to Aunt Claudine:—

"Everything seems so thoroughly pleasant here; here I find nothing disturbed from its usual course."

The Prince was evidently offended that any secret preparations had been made for his reception; it probably seemed to him that he was surrounded by spies.

And now Sonnenkamp's wrath broke out anew, not against himself, but against the Prince, who ought to remember how long he had lived in a foreign land; and the Professorin ought to have managed matters better, for she had been a lady-in-waiting at Court; and Pranken ought to have managed better, too, for was he not a chamberlain?

Sonnenkamp fumed with rage over the whole business, and now, for the first time, it struck him how strange it was that these people should treat all this humbug of rank so seriously; they knew that it was humbug, but its very existence depended on their vying with each other to keep up the appearance of entertaining religious veneration for the humbug.

For a little while Sonnenkamp thought of giving up the whole scheme. Why should he be ennobled; why should he enter the Court circle, and put himself under a lasting obligation? He was proud of possessing an independent nature, and now was he to allow himself to be put in uniform, and to measure every step, every movement, and every word, according to the court etiquette? He would rather remain as he was, proud of his own position, and show openly the contempt which he felt for the whole body of nobles.

Then he felt with pain that he had already gone too far; a retreat would be a mere disgrace. And how long he had consoled Frau Ceres with this hope, how far he was bound for Pranken's sake, and, more than all, for Roland's! What was to become of the latter, if he was not raised to the nobility? Were Roland and his descendants to be impoverished again? No, rank must be won. On the boldly earned property an entail should be laid, so that generation after generation of his descendants should never be stripped of rank and wealth; the villa and the castle should remain an inalienable possession in the family.

Something of his own past life rose in Sonnenkamp's memory, and he said to himself aloud,—

"You owe it to your child to turn aside from him what has brought you to this pass."

Calm and resolved he went back to the house, and appeared to all highly gratified with the visit. Indeed, when Joseph told him that the Princess' party had not left a single present for the servants, he gave him a handsome sum, saying that it had been entrusted to Pranken; the servants would spread the report far and wide, that the Prince had been at the villa and left large gratuities for them; this would rouse the envy of the neighbors, and the envy would carry the report still farther, and the best of it was that they would all be deceived.

Sonnenkamp whistled softly, a sure sign that he was particularly cheerful and contented. He devoted himself with special attention to the Aunt, praised her modesty and the Prince's insight in knowing how to value her as she deserved. It seemed really to delight him to see people decline praise which really tickled them excessively.

On the next evening but one, when the Aunt and Manna went out upon the flat roof to look at the stars, they found an excellent telescope placed on a movable stand. When they thanked Sonnenkamp for this surprise, he asked in return only one favor, that Fräulein Dournay would accompany the family to Carlsbad; but she declined positively, as the Professorin also did.

Pranken had come back; he thought it absurd to appear offended, and to do this tutor the honor of looking upon him as a rival. He was made happy by the unconstrained and cordial greeting he received from Manna, who treated him with more familiarity than ever before.

"I am glad," he said to her, "that you have something of the sphinx in you, like other women. I was mistaken in you, and am rejoiced that I was mistaken. What is puzzling and constantly offering new problems, keeps life fresh."

Manna did not understand him, but she asked for no explanation; she only told him with regret that the Aunt and the Professorin were not going with them to Carlsbad. Pranken thought this very proper, and Manna looked at him in surprise when he spoke of the pretensions of these Huguenots.

"And Herr Dournay," he added, "will he stay behind also, declining as firmly and decidedly as he did to go to Vichy last year?"

"I don't know," answered Manna. "Papa," she called out to her father, who came up just then, "is Herr Captain Dournay going with us to the Baths?"

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"Certainly. He belongs to the family, and understands that he does; he has not objected for a moment."

Pranken was in some embarrassment; he took this compliance quite as a matter of course, and added that perhaps Herr Captain Dournay — emphasizing the title, would find his friend, the negro Adams, the Prince's footman, at Carlsbad, and would be able to perfect the intimacy which he had begun here. Pranken hoped, perhaps, to bring out some cutting remark about Eric, but, to his surprise, neither Sonnenkamp nor Manna answered a word; he was forced to wind up the subject, by saying that these atheists and democrats must of course disorganize all social arrangements, and fraternize with a negro; it was only praiseworthy in Herr Dournay to act consistently with his principles.

Bella and Clodwig only just made a passing call, to say that they were going to Carlsbad and should be very glad to meet their friends there.

Bella was especially animated in her expressions of pleasure at the idea of meeting them constantly for weeks together; she promised herself and her friends great enjoyment, and was enough at her ease to say jokingly to Eric, that if a charity-concert was given, at which she played, he must sing.

Eric assented, without the least embarrassment.

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CHAPTER XII.

THE PRIDE OF OUR PLANET.

THE season at Carlsbad was unusually brilliant. Seldom had so many of the nobility and so many adventurers assembled at the Baths. To the second class, but perhaps also to the first, belonged Sonnenkamp, who arrived with a great retinue, wife and daughter, son, tutor, gouvèrnante, and a number of servants, the latter, however, not dressed in livery, but modestly, in plain citizens' clothes.

The Count, as well as Clodwig and Bella, had been at the Baths a week when Sonnenkamp's household arrived. Clodwig took his young friend, with some solemnity, to the spring, and told how he himself had once been brought there by the philosopher, Schelling, who said to him, —

"Behold! this spring is the pride of our planet."

All conventional distinctions must cease before such a fountain of health as this, Clodwig added, for it says to us, — You must leave your lofty and your lowly dwellings; in my presence, all are alike high-born and low-born. Clodwig had already caught the liberal tone.

On the very day of Sonnenkamp's arrival, a guest was departing whose modesty was equal to the consideration in which he was held; it was Weidmann. Eric met him just as he was drinking his last draught from the spring. The relations between the Sovereign and this President of the representatives, an unyielding opposer of the Court policy, long furnished matter of conversation among the guests; the Sovereign had twice invited him to his table, and addressed him several times when they had met upon the morning walk. Statisticians differed somewhat in regard to the latter point, some maintaining that these morning conversations had taken place twice, others that they had occurred as often as thrice, or even four times.

Again Eric's meeting with Weidmann was short and unsatisfactory, and he disliked to be always reiterating his intention of visiting him.

Clodwig also presented Eric at once to an old friend of his, a well-known banker of liberal education from the great business capital, whom he met every year at some baths, either at Gastein or Ostend, if not here, and with whom, on such occasions, he always spent many hours of the day. The two men were both seventy years old, but the Banker had all the restlessness of youth; he was as eager for knowledge as a German student, and as talkative as a Frenchman in a railway carriage. Clodwig, on the other hand, preserved always a great repose of manner, hardly ever speaking when in motion, but always stopping if he had anything to say, or any reply to make to the remarks of a friend.

The Banker took pains to tell Eric, early in their acquaintance, that he was a Jew.

Owing, doubtless, to the warm commendations that Clodwig had bestowed upon his young friend, the old man took advantage of every opportunity of being in his company, a complaisance which Eric did not reciprocate, he not being accustomed to play the part of listener rather than of speaker, and feeling moreover jealous of the banker, who engrossed so much of Clodwig's time, when he had depended on enjoying the Count's society himself every day during their visit here.

At the breakfast-table, the Prince and Countess Bella were as usual a frequent subject of conversation; they were served up with the favorite dish of delicate pastry. A more interesting topic than even the Countess's toilette were the frequent, almost daily walks, which the Prince took in her company, apparently much to the enjoyment of both parties, as the King was often heard laughing at her ready sallies. Clodwig also could congratulate himself on having received many marks of favor.

Bella established a little court of her own. She breakfasted with a company of chosen friends in the open air, where every one could see her, and her table was always adorned with the choicest flowers. It was even said that the bands played a waltz of her composition.

The Wine-Cavalier also spent a few days at the Baths, and the painter Potiphar, as Bella called him, because he had the misfortune to be surnamed Tailor. This was the fourth watering-place that the Cavalier had honored this summer with his studied elegance, his private album, and his neat little anecdotes. His only object in coming to Carlsbad was, as he often repeated, to pay his respects to his highly esteemed neighbors. Bella received him coldly, and Clodwig pleaded business as an excuse for seeing but little of him, so that after playing a few games with a famous chess-player who was among the visitors, he departed.

The painter Potiphar zealously instructed Eric in the private histories of all the men and women who were drinking the waters, and his companion's ignorance and innocence in these interesting matters were a marvel to him.

When Sonnenkamp met Bella and the Prince walking together, as he did every

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day, Bella nodded graciously, and the King also bowed silently, but in spite of the frequency of their meeting never addressed him.

The Cabinetsrath was present as one of the Court, and with him and an experienced officer of police, who always hovered about the sovereign at a distance, Sonnenkamp usually took his morning walk.

Pranken, who had his own independent lodging, but joined himself to the Sonnenkamp party, was soon initiated into the life of the various groups.

A beautiful Wallachian, who always went about dressed in deep mourning, with a black veil upon her head, and spoke to no one, contested with Sonnenkamp the glory of being the most remarkable object of the season. It was said that the handsome stranger had had the misfortune to discover, soon after her marriage, that her husband had another wife.

Manna took no part in the morning gaieties at the spring; after holy mass, she remained in the house, spending a great portion of her time in practising on the harp, for which purpose she had chosen a room out of hearing of the other visitors.

Frau Ceres awakened general excitement, by being taken to the spring every morning in a chair on wheels. In her lap she always held a little dog, and in her hand a fresh rose.

Pranken was assiduous in his attention to her, and Fräulein Perini never failed to walk by her side. At noon, Frau Ceres appeared beautifully dressed among the promenaders.

All the visitors at the spring were astonished at this, and every morning all eyes followed her, in wonder at her allowing herself to be wheeled through the crowd, though she was in perfect health. But the lady was unconscious of the anger she excited, and only rejoiced in what seemed to her the general admiration.

After the first three days, Eric forbade his pupil to go to the spring in the morning, a regulation which Sonnenkamp remonstrated against, feeling a pride in the universal admiration the handsome boy received. But Eric declared that it was impossible to attend to studies after hearing music in the morning, and the two therefore remained by themselves. Whenever they appeared abroad, however, men and women alike agreed that they had never seen a handsomer boy, or a man of more attractive appearance.

Pranken often complained that the extraordinary favor shown him by the Sovereign obliged him often to spend whole days away from his friends.

Sonnenkamp could boast of being received into the most select society, thanks to the influence of Bella. It was no matter to him that the aristocracy said among themselves that a bath-acquaintance did not necessitate any subsequent relation with a man. He hoped, nay, he was almost sure, that during his stay here at Carlsbad, the first step would be taken that should put him on an equality with the best; in the meanwhile he conducted himself in the most free and easy manner, as a peer among peers.

Already his relations to Bella had assumed a character which added a fresh interest to his life here. They had always been secretly attracted together, chiefly by admiration of a certain heroic power which each saw to exist in the other, and which each held to be the one mark of distinction from the masses. This daily intercourse now revealed more distinctly to them what they had only glimpses of during the winter in the capital.

Both agreed perfectly in looking upon all communities, all human society, as nothing but a tacit agreement to tell lies: no one believes his neighbor, no one honors his neighbor; all that is valued is a certain outside show, a humbug, which must be kept up as long as it can; no one, except a few idiots of teachers or idealists, actually believes in the idols of his own constructing.

Sonnenkamp admired Bella extremely, and maintained that she was the only woman of spirit and intellect he had ever met, a declaration which both knew to be true, in spite of their agreeing that all fair words were nothing but lying conventionalities. Bella knew that she had spirit, and acknowledged Sonnenkamp's right to bear witness to it.

He repeatedly gave her to understand that he alone appreciated the greatness of her nature.

"The man who should have a wife like you," he once said openly to her, "and were himself a man — a dominant nature with a wife like you would establish a new throne in the world. I consider it a privilege to have been allowed to know a nature so born to rule as yours."

He said it half in a tone of gallantry, but she knew he meant it in earnest, and she took it in earnest, being full of contempt for the pettinesses of the world, where half the people found pleasure in intrigue, and the other half in what they call humanity, which is really nothing but sentimentality.

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Their mutual salutations, therefore, if they only met and passed, were significant, and implied a secret understanding. Their glance said: We alone are strong, and we are great enough to scorn all trifling.

One beautiful July morning Bella gave a great breakfast, to which the Sonnenkamp family was invited, and Manna came with her mother; there were also present the Cabinetsräthin, the Adjutant-general, besides several others of the highest nobility; both gentlemen and ladies, from different countries.

The rich and tasteful arrangement of the flowers on the breakfast-table excited the admiration of the guests. Bella presented Herr Sonnenkamp as the generous and skilful giver, and, with great tact, called the attention of the guests to the admirable taste in arranging flowers possessed by this famous garden-artist, whom she even proclaimed the true high priest of flowers.

Sonnenkamp was delighted at the impression produced.

Manna timidly remarked that her taste was offended by the profusion of flowers displayed here on all occasions; she thought that massing them together, and tying them into close bunches, destroyed the whole character of the flowers, of roses especially; their tender nature suffered from such treatment.

Eric replied that, without these flowers, life here would lose an important element of brilliancy and cheerfulness; that the purest and best things were not safe from abuse and exaggeration, but that we should not therefore lose sight of the beautiful underlying principle.

Pranken observed the impression which these words made, and gave a more lively turn to the conversation, by saying that he too did not like bouquets; flowers, birds, and women were the ornaments of life, and should be dealt tenderly with and left unconfined.

Jest and merriment now reigned supreme. All were in that happy frame of mind which is induced by the drinking of the waters and the fresh morning air. There was not wanting an object on which to exercise their wit, in the person of a long lieutenant from Schwarzburg-Sondershausen, or Schwarzhausen-Sonderburg, as Bella always called it. The long lieutenant had openly confessed that his object in coming to the Baths was to bless the daughter of some rich commoner with his title. He had made Bella his confidante, and she amused herself now by bringing him into all manner of ridiculous positions.

The tall lieutenant took it all in good part; his standing joke was that he regretted, on his honor, Roland's not being Sonnenkamp's daughter, that he might marry her.

Manna blushed, for this plainly implied that she was considered betrothed to Pranken.

There was a good deal of gossip about some of the guests at the Baths, their loose and frivolous lives, all of which Manna listened to with the rest, secretly thinking all the while: It is well to know all the discord and confusion of the wicked world before leaving it forever.

Eric divined that some such thought was in her mind, and said in a low tone: —

"In the Bible God says that he will spare Sodom, if a few righteous persons are found in it. And so it is now. The sun shines, the birds sing, the flowers bloom, and the world is better than it seems."

"So you are a believer too?" asked Manna softly.

"Yes; but in a different way from yours."

On rising from table, Clodwig, Sonnenkamp, Eric, Roland, and the Banker, started on a long walk in the woods, while Bella kept Manna by her. Pranken also staid behind with the ladies, being excused today from attendance on the Prince.

Bella had succeeded in getting invitations for Sonnenkamp and his family to the next assembly, at which only the first nobility of Europe were to be present, and began to talk over with Manna the dress she should wear on the occasion. Manna had begged to be allowed to stay at home, but this was declared impossible, and she had been obliged to consent to appear.

Meanwhile the men were taking their walk through the woods. Eric had joined Clodwig at once, and made him smile by saying that he had never before participated in the gaieties of a watering-place, and that the life here almost bewildered him. He wondered whether it would be possible to induce men to go, for a few weeks of every year, to some place for the cure of their souls. In this care for the bodily health was exhibited a selfishness which the world usually took pains to conceal. Clodwig had remained standing, while Eric thus spoke.

"You will never feel quite at home in the world," he answered, continuing his walk.

At a turn in the road, Eric fell back and allowed Sonnenkamp to go in front with Clodwig. There was something at once attractive and repulsive to Clodwig in the society of Sonnenkamp. He had never seen such a man before, and was chiefly im-

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pressed by the sort of courage he possessed in assuming no foreign disguise.

Sonnenkamp made another attempt to induce the Count to use his influence in procuring him a title, but was treated as he never before had been in his life, by receiving a most crushing answer couched in words of courtesy.

"I am amazed at your courage and forbearance," he said; but the idea conveyed by the words was: I detest your insolence and importunity.

"You are indefatigable, and may stand on an equality with the rulers," were the words, but the meaning was: You are a shameless tyrant.

Sonnenkamp had experienced many strange things in his life, but never this lashing a man to madness with courteous words. He kept a smiling countenance, however, not daring to show any sense of injury, while Clodwig maintained a calm superiority, tapping occasionally on his golden snuff-box, as if saying to all the tickling spirits within: Have patience; the man is getting a strong dose. Finally he opened the box and offered Sonnenkamp a pinch, which the latter accepted with thanks.

Eric meanwhile was walking with the Banker. There was one point of common interest between them, their admiration of Clodwig. The Banker maintained that scarce any one but a man of rank could be so independent and thoroughly human.

Roland cast a glance at Eric which seemed to say: You see this man says the same thing.

Eric zealously opposed this idea, and the Banker, who assumed a rather patronizing tone in conversing with the young scholar, was easily converted, and broke out into enthusiastic praise of Eric.

A great pleasure was awaiting Eric on his return from his morning walk, in the arrival of his friend and teacher, Professor Einsiedel.

The poor man of science felt himself quite lost and helpless in such a place as Carlsbad, whither he had been ordered by his fellow-professor, the first physician of the University. Eric made the necessary arrangements for his board and lodging, and whatever else he needed, feeling it a privilege to serve him in every way in his power.

While standing with his teacher, Eric perceived Sonnenkamp in the distance talking with Professor Crutius, who had just arrived. Crutius seemed unwilling to accept Sonnenkamp's friendly advances, and yet could find no way of avoiding them. When Sonnenkamp offered his hand at parting, however, he did not take it, but raised his hat instead with a formal salute.

Eric was so fortunate as to find a room for his teacher in the same house with his own party.

CHAPTER XIII.

A WHIRL OF BODY AND MIND.

BEAUTIFULLY dressed, with flowers in her hair, Manna walked to and fro in the great drawing-room. The sight of her uncovered neck and shoulders in the long mirror seemed to shock her, and she drew more closely about her the encircling cloud of tulle. Roland and Eric entered. Eric stood motionless.

"How late you are!" said Manna.

Eric explained that he had been introducing his teacher to the routine of watering-place life, and expressed the hope that Manna would enjoy the society of the delicate-minded old man.

"Your teacher?" said Manna, and again Eric noticed the tears in her voice. "Introduce me to him to-morrow. But now make haste, or you will be late to the assembly."

"I am not invited," replied Eric.

"No! he is not invited, and so I am not going either," cried Roland.

The father and mother appeared, but their persuasions had no effect upon the boy. He would not even yield to Eric's urgent entreaty, but persisted in remaining behind. After the family had actually driven off to the Hall, Roland appeared to regret not having gone with them, and insisted on Eric's taking him to the gallery, whence they could see the dancing.

Pranken was manager of the assembly, and Manna shared the distinction with him. Her cheeks glowed, and she seemed in great spirits, but to Roland's vexation, she did not once look up to the gallery. Manna, in fact, hardly knew herself. In the midst of the gaiety, she said to Pranken: —

"Did you know that Captain Dournay's teacher had arrived?"

Pranken knit his brows. So she was thinking of him in the midst of this gaiety! He was silent for awhile, not knowing what to reply; at last he said in a light tone:—

"Ah, teacher! Don't you get tired of this whole pack of teachers? Here we have pleasing music, dancing,— come!"

He whirled her swiftly among the circle of dancers, and she felt as if she were no longer upon the ground, but were floating in the air.

"Let us go!" said Roland to Eric in the gallery. They left the hall, and took by

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moonlight the same beautiful walk through the forest that they had enjoyed in the morning.

"Is there no way in which I may relieve myself of a secret that has been confided to me?" asked Roland. "I should so like to talk it over with you! May I not tell it you?"

"No, you must not under any circumstances break your word. If you did, you would lose all hold upon yourself."

Roland sighed; he sorely wanted to tell Eric that his family was to receive a title.

When they came out upon the clearing, and saw the town and the whole valley lying in the moonlight, and heard a few broken strains of music from the ball-room rising through the night air, Roland returned to the subject: —

"I have an idea that this evening Manna is to be openly acknowledged as Pranken's bride. My mother thinks that that will help forward the accomplishment of the other secret. Can you not guess what it is?".

Eric replied with great self-control, that it was not honorable of Roland to speak of any family matters that had been confided to him.

He spoke with a trembling voice. This thing, which had been so long decided, suddenly came upon him as something new, unheard of, improbable. With rapture and yet with fear, he perceived that he had allowed Manna to become dearer to him than he ought. He buried the point of his cane deep in the ground, and pressed upon it so violently that it broke to pieces in his hand. He told Roland it was time they went home.

The carriage drove up to the door just as they reached the house, and out of it came Sonnenkamp, followed by Frau Ceres and Manna.

"Are you betrothed to Pranken?" asked Roland.

"You silly child!" returned Manna, as she ran quickly up the steps.

Sonnenkamp sent Roland to bed, and asked Eric to go with him into his room.

"Here is a mild brand of cigar," he said, throwing himself back in his arm-chair, "light one. Captain Dournay, I look upon you as one of the family; you are ours, and must ever remain so."

Eric trembled. Had the father's suspicions been roused by Roland's awkward question, and was he about to tell him that he must give up all thought of Manna? Or was he about to offer him his daughter's hand? He had time enough to entertain these opposing thoughts, for Sonnenkamp made a long pause, in the evident expectation of receiving some answer to his friendly address. But as his companion remained silent, he got up, and after taking several turns up and down the room, suddenly stopped before Eric and said:—

"I give you to-day the most indubitable proof that I consider you one of ourselves. Give me your hand."

Eric did so, and shuddered as he touched the iron ring on the man's thumb.

Sonnenkamp continued:—

"I recognize and honor your reserve."

Eric's eyes wandered uneasily. What did all this mean?

After several hasty puffs at his cigar, Sonnenkamp continued:—

"You have never, in any way, alluded to what has been going on among us, though you cannot have failed to be aware of it."

Eric still trembled. Sonnenkamp kept making such unusual pauses.

At last, bringing the words out with an effort, he said:—

"You know that I am about to receive a title?"

"No, I did not know it."

"You did not? Is it possible? Did Roland give you no hint?"

"A hint indeed of some secret, but I strictly forbade him to relate, even by a breath, any confidence that had been reposed in him."

"Good. You're a good teacher. I am grateful to you, sincerely grateful. I will be yet more so. You shall have proof of it. To be open with you, Captain Dournay — you can give me substantial help by furthering this plan of mine."

"I?"

"Yes, you. You are the friend of our noble Count Wolfsgarten. He is already one of our family, but he always declines to discuss this matter, when I, or any of my friends, address him upon the subject. You know me, my dear Captain; you have watched my life, and your eye is keen; I have a right to expect that, with all my faults, of which, unhappily, I have my share, you will judge of me justly and charitably. You are a man who will act as he thinks. You understand me?"

"Not entirely, I confess."

"Plainly, then, in a few days I shall give a rural fête at Heilingthal. I will take the Jew with me, and you can go with your friend Wolfsgarten, and can easily discover what sort of opinion he will give of me, or has already given."

"Would not Herr von Pranken, or the Countess, or the Cabinetsräthin, be better suited for such an office?"

"No; in that case I should not trouble you with it. Count Wolfsgarten has de-

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clined expressing any opinion, saying always in his pedantic — I mean in his strictly honorable manner, that a judgment which is to be expressed in confidence to the Prince should be made known to no one else. In a few days the Prince will depart; he is favorably disposed. You will therefore discover this for me, dear Dournay, will you not? It will be so easy for you!"

"Herr Sonnenkamp," replied Eric, "you had the kindness to say a few moments ago that I did right in forbidding Roland to betray a secret. How shall I ——"

"Ah, my dear Dournay," interrupted Sonnenkamp, "we may reasonably allow ourselves many things that we should forbid a young person to do. I respect, I honor your truthfulness. I acknowledge the great sacrifice you would make in rendering me this service fully, thoroughly, but you will make the sacrifice, will you not?"

Eric tried to decline the task. Sonnenkamp threw his head back, and whistled softly to himself, while Eric maintained with great earnestness that he was not good at sounding others' opinions, and that he should consider it a betrayal of friendship to repeat anything which was said to him confidentially. "Besides," he concluded, "I do not think that Count Wolfsgarten would express his opinion any more fully to me."

Sonnenkamp was inwardly angry, but summoned all his powers of self-control to his aid. He praised Eric's conscientiousness; spoke with enthusiasm of his delicate tact, his moral purity, and the loftiness of his ideal; he went so far as to apologize for having fancied, even for a moment, that Eric was more than a friend to Bella; his unhappy experience among men, he said, must serve as his excuse for the injustice; he considered it as the greatest of privileges to have been once allowed the acquaintance of a thoroughly pure and noble man.

Eric had never supposed that this man knew him so well; this Sonnenkamp must have a nobler mind than he had given him credit for, to be able to read so well the noble struggles of others.

The impression he had made was not lost upon Sonnenkamp. He laid his hand on Eric's shoulder, and said with a trembling, almost a tearful voice, —

"My dear young friend! Yes, my friend — I call you so, for you are such — even if I have not myself the right to claim so close an intimacy with you as I should like, consider what a great, what a necessary influence indeed you may exert — not for me; of what consequence am I? — but for our Roland. For our Roland!" he repeated significantly. The mention of Roland's name suddenly roused Eric as from a dream. He answered by asking why Herr Sonnenkamp desired a title for Roland.

"Oh, my friend!" Sonnenkamp continued with increasing affection, "that is the last, the only object of all my efforts in the Old World and in the New. Oh, my friend! Who can tell you how soon I may die? You will remain the friend, the support of my son. Give me your hand upon it. Promise me you will so continue. I shall die without a fear, knowing he is under your protection. Alas, no one suspects how ill, how shaken I am. I force myself to appear firm and erect, but I am inwardly broken. The labors and struggles of life have sapped my strength. Any moment may end my life, and I would gladly leave my son in an assured position. You, my friend, love our beautiful, glorious Germany; you will be glad to secure to her a strong and faithful son. Should Roland continue as he is, should he preserve his present name, he will always consider himself a citizen of the world across the ocean, not a true son of our noble Germany, where alone a man of mind and of means can find a sphere for his usefulness. Forgive me if I do not express myself as warmly as I feel, and as I ought, to a friend like you. I only ask you to add to your other benefits to Roland that of making him a son of Germany; if not for our sakes, yet for the sake of our dear country."

Sonnenkamp well knew what a responsive strain he touched in Eric, by those tender words from the anxious heart of a father, and by this broad, reverent outlook, not only beyond his own death, but beyond all thought of self. Eric was touched, and said:

"I would give my life for Roland ——"

Sonnenkamp would have embraced him, but Eric begged him to listen further.

"My life I can give up, but not my principles. I am willing to adopt your views of the matter in a moment, if you can convince me I am mistaken. Do you really believe that it would add to Roland's happiness to have a title?"

"It would make his happiness; without that he would have no happiness. I am sure you will not misunderstand me, my very dear, noble friend. I frankly confess to you that I prize money highly; I have worked hard for it, and should like to keep it; I should like to convert my personal property into real estate, at least in a great measure: I want my son freely to enjoy what I have toiled with unremitting industry to obtain. Oh, my friend, you do not know — it is better you should not know what blows my life has borne, be-

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cause I — but no more of that; it would agitate me too much to-day. I had a tutor — a shrewd man, but unhappily not of such moral purity as yourself — who, I remember, often said to me: He only is free who is not bound to the same level with others, but is entitled to be judged by a loftier standard. A genius, a man like yourself, my dear friend, is by nature so entitled; but all are not geniuses. Genius is unattainable, therefore do men seek a title of nobility that posterity may judge them by that higher standard. I express myself clumsily, do I not?"

"No! the thought is subtilely developed."

"Ah, let us leave all subtleties. But I have after all omitted the chief point; it is well I remember it. It was you who first directed my thoughts and my efforts towards this aim."

"I? How so?"

"Let me remind you. On the first day of your coming among us you told me, and you have often repeated it since, that Roland had no special talent that would lead him to the choice of a profession. The remark offended me at the time, but I see now that it was perfectly true. For the very reason that Roland is not gifted with genius, he must take rank among the nobility, have a title, which of itself gives position and dignity to persons of average capacity, who are not able to carve out their own career. A nobleman is not sensitive; that is his great advantage. A baron or an earl is somebody at the start, and is not obliged to make himself somebody; if, besides that, he has any gifts, they are all clear gain, and the world is grateful for them. We commoners must begin by making ourselves something; we are nothing at the start except sensitive, thin-skinned. Ah, my dear friend, I speak very confusedly."

"By no means."

"I will say but one thing more. Roland will at some time, and it may be soon, enter on the possession of millions; if he is a noble, he will not only stand in the circle of the select, but he will have all the obligations of honor, of benevolence, of usefulness, and will have them in a higher degree, because he will be one newly raised to rank. I open my whole heart to you, my friend — I conceal nothing. Almost the whole inhabited world is known to me, and shall I tell you what I have found in it?"

"I should be glad to know."

"Know, then," here Sonnenkamp laid both hands upon Eric's shoulder, "you are a philosopher, a deep thinker — learn something from me."

"Willingly."

"Let me tell you then, my friend, there are three classes among mankind, each bound so closely together that no member stands alone. A man must belong to one of these in this degenerate world."

He paused awhile, and then, in answer to Eric's questioning glance, continued: —

"Yes, my friend, in this world a man must be either a Jew, a Jesuit, or a noble. You smile? The idea surprises you? Let me explain. If you survey the whole world you will find that each one of these three classes, and only these, forms a firm, lasting, indissoluble union among its members. My son cannot be a Jew, a Jesuit he shall not be, therefore he must be a noble."

Eric was fairly bewildered by Sonnenkamp's arguments. He strove to exercise his own freedom of thought, but he saw how immovably Sonnenkamp's mind was made up, and looking over the past, he perceived how everything had been tending towards this one aim. And after all, might it not be an advantage for Roland to enter the ranks of the nobility? Might not this be the only means of establishing a home for him in Germany?

The interview lasted till far into the night, Sonnenkamp constantly endeavoring to prove the necessity of making Roland a noble, and Eric at last, almost from sheer weariness, promised to use his influence with Clodwig. He got no rest as he lay in bed; he seemed to himself a traitor, but the voice of the tempter said: —

"After all, it is not you who can bring it about, nor he, but the Prince. Whether you lend your aid or not, the thing is sure to be done. Why should you be disobliging and ungrateful?

CHAPTER XIV.

THE TEACHER'S TEACHER.

"Ball" — "American" — "Betrothed" — was heard the next morning at the spring in all the different languages, for, inconsistent as it may seem, winter gayeties are brought into a place frequented only by invalids.

Frau Ceres' carriage did not appear at the spring; she had a tumbler of mineral water brought to her room.

Before the altar in the village church lay Manna, long after the mass was over, studying her own heart. She cried out for help, for support against the world; she remembered the advice of the Priest to make free confession, wherever she might be, to a brother or a father, and she longed to confess here; but she did not, for there was

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one thing she could not tell. For the first time, she left the church with a burden on her heart.

Eric was fighting his fight with himself out upon the hills. Sonnenkamp had spoken with great openness to him, but one thing he had not said, that Pranken was waiting till Manna was titled before announcing the betrothal. He was angry with himself for having allowed the idea to take possession of him, and perhaps increase, though unconsciously, his repugnance to the commission laid upon him.

The sudden calling of his name terrified him, though it was pronounced by a gentle voice. Looking up he perceived Professor Einsiedel coming towards him. What better man could he have to clear up his doubts and restore his peace of mind? For one moment, he entertained the thought of laying all his questions before the pure and childlike, yet clear and brave spirit, of his old friend; but neither could he confess, neither could he tell all, and so he too shut his secret in his own heart.

The good old man could not understand how he was to live for weeks without work, without books, doing nothing but nurse his body. Such a cure as this, he said with a childlike smile, was only a sickness with the ability to take walks, and it would be nothing worse than sickness if he lay in bed.

But he soon turned the conversation from himself, and asked Eric about his studies, and how he was getting on with his great work upon slavery. Before Eric could answer, the Professor told him that he was continually making notes upon the subject for him, and that one of the most striking things he had met with was the decision with which Luther, from a religious point of view, had expressed himself in favor of holding slaves.

"I do not blame Luther," he continued; "he adopted the views of his day, just as others in other generations have believed in the agency of evil spirits. The language of the great Bossuet shows how much the strongest minds were influenced by the general belief of the time; he said that whoever denied the right of holding slaves sinned against the Holy Ghost. Perhaps a future generation will be as little able to understand our prejudices."

Eric found in this morning walk a satisfaction to which he had been long a stranger. Professor Einsiedel had looked cautiously about him as he walked, as if fearing some one might overhear the great secret he was about to reveal. At last he said: —

"Dear Doctor," he always called Eric Doctor, "I have been thinking a great deal about the task of educating a rich youth. The absolutely right I have not found; that can exist only in the imagination. But so to educate a human being, intellectually and morally, that we can be approximately sure — mark you, I say approximately — that we can be approximately sure, or have reason to believe, that in any given case he will be guided by pure moral laws, that is all that we can hope to do; and I am very much mistaken, if that is not what you have already succeeded in accomplishing with regard to your pupil. As far as I know the world, —and I was tutor myself once, though only for a short time — as far as I know the world, those of high birth, and no doubt it is the same with those of great wealth, are full of wishes and cravings; and the task is to convert these wishes, these cravings, this expectancy, into active will and effort. Your handsome pupil has excellent dispositions in this respect; he understands the seriousness of life."

Never had the forest seemed to Eric so grand, the sunlight so clear, the air so invigorating, the whole world so transfigured, as when he heard this testimony from his teacher's lips. Silently he walked by his side, and sat with him in the forest; he would gladly have kissed the good man's delicate hand.

At another time, Professor Einsiedel admonished Eric that he was falling into the very error common among rich men of neglecting his own culture.

"Living with others is good," he said; "but living with one's self is better; and I fear you have not lived as you should with yourself."

He asked Eric plainly how far he had finished his book, and like a school-boy who finds himself detected in laziness and neglect of duty, Eric was obliged to confess that it had altogether dropped out of his mind. The face of the Professor suddenly collapsed, as if it were nothing but wrinkles; after a long silence he said, —

"You are inflicting the greatest injury on yourself and your pupil."

"On myself and my pupil?"

"Yes. You have no intellectual work of your own to counteract the daily distractions of your profession, and, therefore, you do not bring to your teaching the necessary freshness and elasticity. I have been a teacher myself, and always made it a rule to preserve inviolate my own intellectual sanctum, and in that way constantly renewed my strength. It is one of the conditions of a proper education, that the teacher should not be always at the disposal of his pupil. The pupil should un-

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derstand, that living side by side with him is another human being like himself, who has his own life to nourish, and that no one has a right to command from another the total surrender of himself and all his powers. You must never consider yourself as a finished man; mark, I say finished; you must keep on educating yourself. To be finished is the beginning of death. Look at the leaves upon the trees; as soon as one has reached its perfection, it begins to turn yellow and shrink."

The words made a deep impression upon Eric. What this man here in this silent wood-path was saying aloud, he had often felt, but had never been willing to confess even to himself.

"'Non semper arcum tendit Apollo,' says Virgil," Eric answered, quoting from his teacher's favorite poet.

"Good, good! that agrees with what I say. Apollo, to be sure, is not always bending his bow, but he never lays it aside; it remains his inalienable attribute."

They went on for some time in silence, till presently the Professor began again, —

"You are still young; you must not waste these morning hours of your life. I warn you as your teacher and your father, yes in the very spirit of your father. It is my right and my duty thus to speak, for your father should serve you as a warning."

"My father serve me as a warning?"

"Yes. I need not remind you of the worth and importance of his labors, but your father often lamented that he had allowed an unworthy regard for his standing in society to interfere with his devotion to pure knowledge; he could not resume the steadiness of his former habits of study. More than that, he found himself thinking of persons while he was writing, instead of thinking only of ideas, which is our religion. If we lose that, we are the worst of idolaters; our idol is even less than a picture in a temple; it is the most worthless of all idols, the fickle voice of society."

Eric still remained silent, and the kindly old man began again, —

"Here is another proof of the wonderful connection of events. Our clinical Professor had to overcome a strong repugnance on my part to undertake this cure; neither of us knew that the real object of my being sent here was, perhaps, to be a healing-spring to you."

"Indeed you are," exclaimed Eric, as he grasped his teacher's delicate hand. Only for a little while longer, he said, till Roland had entered upon whatever work should be next appointed him, he wanted to devote himself entirely to his pupil; then he would return to the service of pure knowledge.

The Professor warned him not to wait for that, for he should never lose his hold of the world of ideas.

"Or if you mean to devote yourself to practical life," he added, "I have nothing to say against that; only you must decide on one or the other."

Eric returned to the hotel as one roused from a dream. He saw the danger which threatened him, of seeking to shine in society by a display of the thoughts and the knowledge he had acquired in the studies which he now no longer pursued. The Professor had touched a very different chord in him from what the Doctor had once stirred. He took pleasure in making his old teacher better acquainted with Clodwig, the Banker, Sonnenkamp, and particularly with Roland, whose lessons he now resumed with an energy which filled the boy with amazement.

The Professor took especial pleasure in the society of Roland, who called him, as he had done at their first meeting, "grand-teacher." There was a deference and a ready submission in his manner, which filled Eric with delight, when he saw them together. Many a saying of the noble old man's sank deep into the boy's mind.

"Who would suppose that the long lieutenant and the Professor belonged to the same race of men?" he once said to Eric.

Eric liked to leave his pupil as much as possible alone with the Professor, and was gratified by having the latter say to him after a few days, —

"You have done a good work; the boy has that sensitive pride in him which we are apt to associate with gentle birth. I should have no fear of his falling into low or criminal habits; his noble pride would be repelled by their vulgarity. There is no denying the fact that self-esteem amounting to pride can become, under proper guidance, a sure moral principle."

Bella had begun by trying to make a butt of the Professor, but the old man looked at her with an expression of such childlike compassion, and at the same time of such mild rebuke, that she soon dropped her tone of banter, and overlooked the good Professor altogether.

This unpretending and apparently inexperienced man formed, however, very decided opinions upon all whom he met. Clodwig he perceived to be a good and noble man. His classical education de-

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lighted him particularly. "Classical education," he said, "is the stone foundation, which, firmly planted in the ground, is itself invisible, but bears up the whole building."

The Banker was too uneasy and restless to please him, but he gave him credit for possessing a characteristic very common among the Jews, that of gratitude even for intellectual benefits.

Sonnenkamp inspired the Professor with a shrinking awe. He acknowledged that the feeling was unjust, for the man had always showed great friendliness towards him, but still he could not conquer it.

He once confessed to Eric that he was afraid of persons who were so strong; he always felt as if Sonnenkamp would take him up in his arms like a little child and run away with him. He knew he should never understand the man's character perfectly; reading characters was something like deciphering inscriptions on stone; if you cannot make them out at the first glance, you will succeed no better with hard study.

Quite a new influence was exerted, however, as Professor Einsiedel became more intimate with Manna. In Eric's case, he had recognized instantly his having been sent to this place by that invisible power which harmonizes all life, for the purpose of bringing help to his young friend. Such was even more the fact with regard to Manna, though here he was not conscious of it. Manna was needing and seeking help, and attached herself, with the loving watchfulness of a daughter, to this delicate man, who outwardly was so childlike and dependent.

Geology and chemistry have not yet satisfactorily settled the manner in which these medicinal springs work their cures, and we are equally ignorant of the workings of that subtle influence by which one man affects another for good or for evil. Thus mysteriously did Professor Einsiedel influence Manna. When she told him of her desire to enter the convent, he expressed his envy.

"If I were a Catholic," he said, "I would enter a convent too; but it must be a different kind of a convent, one exclusively for men of science, who have no time or faculty for providing for the necessities of life, and yet have works of importance to carry out."

Manna smiled, for she could not help thinking of Claus, who also wanted to enter a convent, so that he might have nothing to do but drink all the time. But she quickly banished all such comparisons; for here was a repose, a devotion to a sacred idea, which might boldly compare itself with the sacredness of the church. She trembled at the thought, but could not drive it from her mind. With some timidity, and yet emboldened by the remembrance of her former undoubting confidence, she ventured to approach the Professor, though only interrogatively, upon the subject of the necessity of religious faith, as the only means of salvation. She was amazed at the sudden excitement that blazed up in the quiet little man.

"We are no enemies of the church," he said, "for we only make war upon the living. The church has not been able to fashion the world, nor society, nor a single state; all it has succeeded in doing, is to found asylums and hospitals. Not to her is given the direction of life, but to classical education, to continually advancing culture. My child, there is a fellow-professor of mine in the University, who persistently maintains that the *Corpus juris* has done much more for the civilization of the world, than the fragments which are included under the name of the Old and New Testament. I do not wholly agree with him, for the Bible has touched a different chord in the world. Consider, the world has inherited from classical antiquity two great ideas, those of state and nationality. Men were brought up in these two ideas. Then came religion, and taught universality, the oneness of all mankind, the brotherhood of man, and the unity of humanity. Religion alone could have done it; it would have been impossible for the Roman civilization under the old and new Cæsars. The church has done her work; she has implanted the idea of humanity. Now people assemble again in states, in nationalities, still needing to preserve the idea of brotherhood. But forgive me, I am falling too much into the schoolmaster's tone.'

"No, no; pray go on; I understand. Pray go on!"

"Very well, then; what was ever purely ideal is not lost to the world, only it must not require to be forever and ever the one sole expression of truth. Here lies the difference between us unbelievers, as we are called, and believers. Let me illustrate my meaning by facts — or do I weary you?"

"How can you think so poorly of me?"

"Forgive me. The present century is laboring for two great objects, the emancipation of the serfs, and the abolition of slavery. They will be accomplished, but not by the church; no, by the progress of culture. Forgive me, my child, I do not want to confuse you. Never touch upon the sub-

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ject again, be sure you never do again. I am a patient man, very patient. I want to disturb no one, but I pray you, most earnestly I must pray you, never to touch upon these subjects with me again. As I have said, I am sorry if I have spoken slightingly of anything which is sacred and dear to you; I hope it will so continue to you, although I reject it. But I beg you, earnestly beg you, not to approach this theme again."

As Manna walked by the side of the Professor, she longed for some hand from heaven to snatch her away from him.

What had she fallen upon? What words had she had to hear? and that not from a man of the world, but from one who desired nothing but to end his life in modest quiet.

No hand from heaven was outstretched to snatch her away, and she gradually succeeded in regaining her tranquillity.

It was well she should have heard this from a man she could not despise. This was the last assault of the tempter; she would not yield under it. So she promised herself, and pressed her hand on her heart, as if there was something there of which she would keep fast hold. But the deed was done; she could not recall it. She had lost that for which she had been ready to sacrifice her life, for the church, to which she had been ready to give herself, had done nothing towards destroying this monstrous evil.

She felt inclined henceforth to avoid the Professor; but that would have been unjust. What had he done except honestly to tell her his convictions?

A feeling of attachment led her still to devote much of her time to him, but both avoided any discussion upon matters of religion; only Manna would sometimes look up at him with wondering eyes, when he would quote, from heathen writings, sayings which she had been taught to consider the exclusive property of the church.

A wide horizon opened before her eyes, in which the different religions seemed only so many promontories, and this unassuming, delicately organized man seemed a type of the human individual, who had received into himself and harmonized all contradiction. She saw Eric's reverence for the Professor, his childlike deference, his respectful attention, the submission which he every hour displayed towards him. She watched Eric closely. It surprised her that this man of strongly marked individuality should be capable of such humble veneration for another.

Professor Einsiedel was often accompanied also by a little dried-up old man of most humble exterior, who always withdrew at Manna's approach, as if he felt himself unworthy to intrude upon the society of men.

Professor Einsiedel once told Manna the history of this companion of his. They had been school-fellows together, and this man was early taken from his studies on account of the death of his father, and the necessity of providing for his brothers and sisters. He became book-keeper in a great banking house, by which he earned enough not only to support a widowed sister and her children, but managed, by practising the strictest economy, to lay by a considerable sum.

One night, on returning from the theatre, he found that his nephew had broken open his desk, stolen his whole property, and escaped with it to America. Without telling any one of the robbery — for how could he give up to justice his sister's son? — he began anew to spare and to save, and thus sacrificed his life for that of another.

Professor Einsiedel had no idea what a deep impression this simple history made upon Manna, — this story of silent, unobtrusive self-sacrifice.

One subject upon which Manna and Einsiedel could converse with perfect sympathy was Eric's mother. The Professor took for granted that Manna lived on terms of intimate friendship with the noble lady, and he could not find words strong enough to express his appreciation of her firmness and nobleness of mind. Manna smiled to hear him say that the Professorin had converted him from a very low opinion of the capabilities of her sex, to a conviction that a woman is endowed with all the characteristics of man, only in a more beautiful shape. Manna also had many pleasant things to tell of Eric's mother.

This unassuming little man, who had thus dropped by chance into their circle, had exercised on the minds of all an influence far outweighing that of the excitements and allurements of the life in the great world.

But even in this society, Sonnenkamp thought only of advancing his own plans of self-aggrandizement. In a few days the Prince, Clodwig, and Bella were to take their departure; if he could not win over the Prince, he was resolved to attach all the nobility at least to his interests.

CHAPTER XV.

THE MARRIAGE PROCESSION TURNED TO STONE.

The day of the fête had arrived. Roland rode on in front with Pranken, Sonnenkamp walked with the Banker, and Eric with Clodwig. The day was clear and sunny, without being too warm. A brilliant

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company left their carriages upon the hill, and strolled down the wood-path to the valley below.

Eric tried to lead the conversation to Sonnenkamp's receiving a title of nobility, but Clodwig at once interrupted him, and, with a tone of almost parental authority, warned him against mixing himself up in any way with that matter. For the first time, there was something in Clodwig's look that Eric could not fathom. They went down the path in silence. A struggle was going on in Eric's mind, and in Clodwig also was a conflict of feeling concerning his young friend.

As soon as they reached the valley, Sonnenkamp drew Eric aside, and asked what opinion Clodwig had expressed. Eric replied that he declined speaking at all upon the subject.

"Thank you—thank you very much," ejaculated Sonnenkamp, with no apparent reason.

By the side of the brook in Heilingthal Joseph had already spread the table, and Sonnenkamp had only the addition of a few trifles to suggest. The company assembled was most select, and all expressed surprise and pleasure at the arrangements that had been made. The long lieutenant was particularly eloquent, and called up a singular expression in Sonnenkamp's face by always, although he was no Austrian, addressing him as Herr von Sonnenkamp. A band of music, stationed in the forest, played sweet and lively airs. A great point of interest was the group of rocks above where the company were seated, which, the story ran, had been the living figures of a marriage procession turned into stone by spirits from the lower world.

"What can have been the origin of this tradition?" asked Bella, turning to Eric.

All gave polite attention, as Eric explained that this was one of the many variations of the Tannhäuser tradition, and that nations in the dawn of civilization gave themselves up to a belief in the old traditions, which have their root in the ever haunting mystery of the origin of the earth.

Suddenly a forester's horn was heard, and rocks and valley became the theatre of a strange spectacle. A band of gipsy musicians, fantastically dressed, came suddenly to view, playing wild melodies, — one young fellow in particular, with raven hair, leaping and dancing as he played upon his fiddle. Great praises were bestowed upon Sonnenkamp for his ingenuity in always devising some new entertainment, and his protestations that this was a surprise even to himself, were taken by some for truth, and by others as modesty. A rapid glance, exchanged between himself and Lootz, would have proved to any one who had seen it his sincerity in disclaiming all knowledge of the exhibition.

Bella encouraged the gipsies to wilder and wilder music, and, on learning that their camp was pitched in the neighborhood, she went to visit it, accompanied by Roland and some of the ladies. The absence of Professor Einsiedel she greatly lamented, as he had told her that the language of the gipsies bore some connection with the Sanscrit. Eric was much surprised at being able to say a few words to these strange people in their own tongue. Bella asked if there was no one in the company who could draw, and insisted on the long lieutenant beginning a sketch at once of the gipsy camp, the wretched horse eating a wisp of hay, the wagon, and the old women sitting about an open fire. A wild, impudent looking girl, who wore a large crinoline, and smoked a short pipe in a free and easy fashion, soon became her especial favorite. One old hag, pointing her skinny hand at Roland, cried out: —

"He shall be our king."

"Can you not tell fortunes?" asked Bella, extending her hand to the old woman.

"Not yours," said the gipsy. "But I want that one next you to show me her hand." With great reluctance, Manna consented. The old woman gave a wild cry, and exclaimed:—

"You have a lover by your side, but you must go across the water to get him, and water must flow from your handsome black eyes. But then three sons and two daughters shall you have——"

Here Manna tore her hand away, and walked on apart from the rest of the party. Much as she despised this criminal sport, and little as the whole company believed in it, it yet strangely affected her. Could Pranken have been the originator of it? It almost seemed so, and yet he was innocent of the whole thing.

"I should like to pronounce a ban," cried Bella.

"What sort of one?" asked all present.

"That for the next fifty years the gipsies should be under its power; that no poet should dare to sing of them."

Manna went on with the others, but she and all around her seemed as in a dream. In her heart she felt that all this had happened, in order that the thought of it might one day serve to recall the world to her mind, when she had left it forever. It already seemed distant, among the things of

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the past. She stood in the life about her as not a part of it, and she was not of it, for the one thought was ever present to her of renouncing it altogether. This year in the world was her trial year, and she rejoiced to think that several months of it were already gone.

Bella, who prided herself upon her skill in reading character, often shook her head, and confessed to her brother that she could make nothing out of Manna; in vain she tried to win her confidence; there was something at bottom which she could not fathom. Manna never spoke to Bella of her desire to return to the convent. Bella now put her arm about Manna's waist, and teased her about the three sons and two daughters, but the girl only smiled as if the words had been addressed to some other person.

On the brow of the hill, under the shade of the pine-trees, carpets had been spread for the ladies, where they rested, while the gentlemen still sat at table, and, at the suggestion of the long lieutenant, who had finished his sketch, passed round the wine.

"Why are you not of the nobility?" asked the long lieutenant of Sonnenkamp.

"Because Herr Sonnenkamp is a citizen," replied Clodwig.

"Citizens can be made nobles when they have millions——"

At an angry sign from Pranken the young man was here brought to a sudden pause. The Cabinetsrath, however, thought it his duty to add, in consideration of Clodwig's being an influential member of the Committee on Orders, whose good opinion was therefore important:—

"Truly, if nobleness of mind, great powers, beneficence, and worth of character raise one to the ranks of nobility, our Herr Sonnenkamp is — will certainly become a nobleman."

The long lieutenant considered himself a great wit, and wits are not easily suppressed, even when they have not been drinking champagne; he therefore exclaimed:—

"Excellent — delicious! Count von Wolfsgarten, you are the wisest of us all; are you also of opinion that a million must have a title? I mean, of course, not the million, but the man who has the million?"

"It is most amiable of you," replied Clodwig, "to exercise in my favor your sovereign right to point out the wisest of us all."

"Thanks," cried the long lieutenant, "that blow told. But I pray you let me have your opinion."

"I think," said a stout retired court-marshal who boasted of having already lost sixteen pounds at the Baths, "I think that our noble host has the right to require that this discussion should not be continued at this time and in this place. Does not your Excellency agree with me?" he added, turning to Clodwig.

Before the Count had time to answer, Sonnenkamp broke in:—

"On the contrary, I should be most happy if my honored guests would so far favor me as to continue the discussion, and allow me to be a listener; I should take it as a proof that they did not regard me as stranger."

Clodwig, who had broken through his usual strict rule of temperance, and allowed himself to be persuaded to drink two glasses of champagne, suddenly assumed a knowing look and said:—

"In that case, Herr Sonnenkamp, let us hear your own opinion upon the subject."

"Yes, yes," cried the long lieutenant; "the man who has earned millions, and has got up such a fairy entertainment as this, must——"

"Pray, let Herr Sonnenkamp speak," interrupted Clodwig.

"My honored guests," began Sonnenkamp, "I have visited every part of the inhabited globe, and have learned that there is and must be everywhere an aristocracy, one class distinguished above the rest."

"It is so among horses and dogs," broke in the long lieutenant. "Countess Dingsda of Russia, has two grayhounds descended from the Empress Katherine —— I mean from the Empress Katherine's days."

The Court-marshal who had lost the sixteen pounds of flesh admonished the long lieutenant in a whisper to hold his tongue, for he was exposing himself and putting out the whole company. The long lieutenant passed his hand over his brow, and softly promised to obey.

"Let us hear you further," urged Clodwig, and Sonnenkamp continued, —

"It is fortunate also for barbarous races when they possess certain families who present them, in historical continuation, the various decisive points in their career, and when new families become distinguished by courage or wisdom, and form, as it were, a new dynasty."

Clodwig observed that the sweat stood in great drops on Sonnenkamp's forehead, and said, with great friendliness, —

"It might be said that the distinctive prerogative of the nobility was to unite culture and courage; one should never be separated from the other. I hope you will understand me aright when I say that the titles

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of nobility perpetuate the remembrance of the gifts, the acquisitions of transcendent genius in a former time, and they have now become an inherited right, or rather involve an inherited duty. The nobleman is the free human being, uniting in himself the gifts of nature and fortune, and preserving a certain chain of connection through the ever changing generations of men. Nobility is a kind of public office to which a man is born. The nobleman should act out his own nature, but is bound at the same time by the conditions of history."

"May the wine freeze in my body, if I understand a word of what he is saying," said the long lieutenant to the Court Marshal, who was trying hard to fight off the sleep which, contrary to all the rules of the treatment, was stealing over him. He suddenly woke up and said, —

"Yes, yes; you are perfectly right; but do keep quiet."

"You yourself," said the Marshal, "must reverence an honest pride in the virtues and bravery of our ancestors. The man who walks through a gallery, from whose walls the pictures of a long line of progenitors look down upon and watch his steps, receives a life-long impression; through his whole life he is followed by the watchful eye of his ancestors."

"True, true!" cried many voices.

"And what follows from that?" asked Clodwig. "Let us return to our original question."

"Just what I am doing. Why should not these historical conditions be constantly reversed?"

"Quite right; that is the proper way to state the question," replied Clodwig. "Is this an age which can concede any special duties, and with them any special privileges, to the nobility? This is the day of equal rights; there are no more members of a privileged class. There are but two classes of men, men of renown and men without renown. The nobility which claims to rest upon hereditary honor is effete; it is incontestably a dying institution. Of what use are coats of arms? Of none but to be embroidered on fire-screens, sofa cushions, and travelling-bags. The equal, universal duty of bearing arms furnishes the reasonable claim to nobility. Science, art, business, are the factors of our time, which the whole people without distinction is equally bound to take part in. We stand in opposition to history. The nobleman was of importance so long as landed property was the foundation of the nation's power. That time is passed, since those high chimneys have reared themselves into the air; since the power of movable property, ideal possessions — for all state securities are but ideal possessions — has surpassed that of landed estates, those days have been no more. One advantage of this personal property is, that it cannot be clutched by the dead hand; the hand of inheritance is a dead hand. I am not opposed to having the nobleman of the present day give his name to business transactions; there are better things than titles and orders by which not only money, but influence, can be gained. I thank the noble Jacob Grimm for exposing, as he does in his essay on Schiller, the folly of supposing that Goethe and Schiller can be ennobled. The nobility of to-day means nothing but a name, a desolation; we go so far as to bestow it even upon the Jews."

"But you, certainly," interrupted the Banker, "would not deny the equal rights of the different religions, the moment this equality of rights knocks at the emblazoned door of nobility?"

"Equal rights!" exclaimed Clodwig. "Quite right, my friend descended from an ancient race. But is it not an absurd perversion to use equal rights for the abolishment of equal rights? If anybody can become a noble, without the necessity of having been born so, of course the Jews can; but they ought not to desire it, they ought to see the disloyalty of it. So far as I see, the Jews — I am speaking now with no reference to their religion — are a living lesson to us not to judge of men by what they believe, but by their progress in virtue and culture. The Jews are, according to our way of regarding them, a race made up of nobles — for who has a longer and purer pedigree? — or they are a people in a certain degree proud of being descended from slaves. I am indebted to an old rabbi, whom I once met at the Baths, for a noble thought."

"What was it?" asked the Banker.

"He said to me — we were in Ostend at the time, walking on the sea-shore and talking of the negro, discussing his capability for freedom and culture, and this rabbi made a very beautiful remark ——"

Clodwig paused for a time as if trying to recall something, then, laying the finger of his left hand upon the bridge of his nose, he said, —

"The rabbi declared that the looking back to a past time of slavery was a great spur to ambition, and that many things which at first sight appear strange in the Jews, may be accounted for by the important fact of their tracing their history back to a period of slavery. They have had implanted in them, by their bondage in Egypt,

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a pride and a humility, a steady resistance to oppression, a quick perception of injustice and of every injury inflicted on others, and hence a sympathy, which is unparalleled in history."

"Certainly."

"A Jew with a coat of arms," continued Clodwig, "with helmet and shield and all the gewgaws — the very sight of them should be an offence to him, for at the time when men wore helmets and shields, his ancestors, the Jews, were servants of the emperor, and almost outside the protection of the laws. A Jew may become Christian from conviction, because, apart from the dogma, he perceives the advance in civilization and culture which the religion of Jews has accomplished. Many change their faith from want of deep principle, not having the courage, or not feeling it to be their duty, to inflict upon themselves and on their children a life-long martyrdom. But a Jew with a title is the most ridiculous anachronism that can be imagined. To become a citizen, to enter that class which is ever increasing in numbers and importance, is the right and the duty of a Jew. But shall there be a union of Jewish noble families, who, like others, shall marry only among themselves? The more we think of the matter, the more absurd the contradictions that arise. However, I did not mean to speak of the Jews, and pray the company to pardon me for having thus strayed from our main point."

"Had we not better put an end to the discussion altogether?" suggested Pranken.

"I have done; only one word more. A piece of music always leaves a painful impression if we have not heard the final cadence, and, therefore, let me say, in a few words, that I consider the raising of a citizen to the ranks of the nobility a historical absurdity, to use no harsher term. The man who leaves the ranks of the citizens is a deserter, an apostate, I will not say a traitor and a fool also, for forsaking the conquering banner of the people. I understand the temptation; they want to secure their possessions to their family, to establish the right of entail; the sons want to be knights; but it is a stinted race after all, a mongrel stock, from which no good tree can grow."

Clodwig had several objects in view in speaking thus; he wanted to make a direct appeal to his companions in rank, and he wanted, once for all, to divert from their purpose Sonnenkamp and the Banker, who he knew had also been induced to aspire to a title.

Perceiving a peculiar expression in the countenance of his old friend, he turned to him, and said: —

"I see you have something on your mind you would like to say."

"Nothing of any consequence," replied the Banker, with a shrug of his shoulders, offering his gold snuff-box to Clodwig and Sonnenkamp. "Our host is a perfect example of what is called in America 'a self-made man,' a term of great distinction. There is no term in our language which exactly expresses it. To have inherited nothing, but to have won everything by his own effort, is the greatest pride of an American. 'Self made man' is, so to speak, the motto upon his shield. Their president elect, Abraham Lincoln, is the best example of this class, who, from being a rail-splitter and a boatman, has attained the highest honor. Are you personally acquainted with Lincoln?"

"I have not the honor," replied Sonnenkamp.

Roland here approached the gentlemen, and requested them to join the rest of the company, as the plan was to have the band play, while all walked together to the place where they had left the carriages. All arose from table. The nobles from the various German principalities stared at one another in amazement, and if any magical change could have come over them, would certainly have been turned into stone, as the bridal procession had been. The long lieutenant and the sleepy Court-marshal would have made most grotesque figures. How was it that a nobleman, a Count von Wolfsgarten, could use such language? The man must be drunk!

They joined the ladies. Clodwig and Eric lingered a little behind. Eric had not spoken a word during the discussion, and Clodwig expressed his vexation at having inconsiderately opened his whole mind to persons, who did not want to listen to serious words.

"I am grateful to you for it," replied Eric.

"I will try to think," said Clodwig in conclusion, "that I have been talking only to you."

The two went together into the woods, where the ladies had now risen from their carpeted resting-place, and, seating themselves on the ground, watched the young people dancing on the meadow below.

Sonnenkamp stood leaning against a tall pine-tree, as if turned into stone, and almost wishing that the whole company might be actually petrified like the marriage procession. A butterfly, which flew over Clodwig's head, and fluttered back and forth

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in the valley before Sonnenkamp's eyes, might have told him what Clodwig was saying to Eric on the hill.

"You asked me this morning my opinion on this matter; I think you know it now. I have declared distinctly, that I shall decidedly oppose all conferring of titles upon new men. I do not mind telling you, however, my young friend, that Herr Sonnenkamp's chances are very good, for my voice is not decisive."

Eric was strangely tempted to go down to where Sonnenkamp was standing and tell him this. He had witnessed the man's disappointment to-day, and would have been glad to encourage him, feeling sympathy for one who desired all things for his son's sake.

He restrained himself, however, being resolved to keep himself aloof from the whole matter. He told Clodwig how Roland had wished, on the evening of the ball, to confide to him the secret of their being about to receive a title, but that it was his intention not to mention the subject to the boy, although his father had opened the way for him to do so. Roland had thus far been keeping the matter quietly in his own mind, and it seemed better now to ignore it altogether, than than to have the son conceive any disapprobation of his father's proceedings. Clodwig agreed perfectly with his young friend, and repeatedly expressed his present contentment at Eric's having rejected his proposal to live with him, for there was a wider and richer field of usefulness open to him where he was.

Both were refreshed by their quiet intercourse.

The long lieutenant now broke in upon Sonnenkamp's solitary musings. The butterfly flew up again, and might have told those on the hill what was passing in the valley below.

"Herr von Sonnenkamp," began the long lieutenant, "have the negroes any musical talent?"

"The negroes are very fond of a kind of music of their own, which is nothing but noise," replied Sonnenkamp; "and many wise men consider that conversation which—" he paused for a word, but seemed to find none sharp enough, and at the same time sufficiently polite. At last he said—"which perhaps might pass for such in the little capital."

He joined the gay company, and, while the band played, they all walked to the place where the carriages were waiting.

It so happened, neither knew how, that Manna and Eric walked together through the woods. They went on, side by side, in silence, though each had so much to say to the other.

"I hear," Manna began at last, "that Count Clodwig expressed himself warmly against rank; did he think that distinction of birth was in any way opposed to religion?"

"He said nothing of the kind."

Again they went on in silence.

"I wonder where our friend, Professor Einsiedel, has been to-day," began Manna again; "I am a pupil of his, too, now."

"It is a great privilege," answered Eric, "to know such a liberal, devout mind."

They said no more, but both felt that there was a sort of sympathy established between them by their reverence for the same man. Not only was their faculty of reverence now the same, but there was a common object of their reverence.

"Eric! Manna!" suddenly cried a voice, which was repeated by all the echoes of the forest. They stood startled at hearing their names thus coupled together, and sent back again, and again, by the stone figures of the bridal procession.

Roland came back to find them, and, giving his right hand to Manna and his left to Eric, led them thus to the carriage, in which all took their seats.

CHAPTER XVI.

CHANGES WROUGHT IN MANY MINDS.

SONNENKAMP felt himself set aside by the Court, or rather completely overlooked; but he could not demean himself by allowing any feeling of wounded pride to appear, therefore he omitted none of the customary salutations of respect, even when the Sovereign looked ungraciously at him. That was the regular court service, to which he was determined to accustom himself.

The day was fixed for the departure of the Prince and his retinue. Sonnenkamp stood among the other distinguished visitors, making the last salutations beside the royal coach, and received his share of the Sovereign's gracious, parting glance. The Cabinetsräthin said to him, as he was about to take his place in the second carriage,—

"Your cause stands well, in spite of the very learned and honorable Court Wolfsgarten."

The departure of the court was, to a large circle of the visitors, like the withdrawal of the bride from the marriage dance; the dancing goes on, there is an exaggerated assumption of gaiety, but the main point of interest is wanting.

Crowds of people came and went; the lively circle, of which Bella formed the

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centre, lost every day one or another of its members; Sonnenkamp was often obliged, against his will, to grace a departure with his offering of flowers. Bella, and Clodwig too, now prepared to depart. Eric had the satisfaction of seeing that a close attachment had been formed between Clodwig and his friend and teacher, Professor Einsiedel.

The last few days were a pleasant relief to Eric and Roland, after the life of excitement that had gone before. They took even the loss of Clodwig and Bella lightly, for they still had Professor Einsiedel. Sonnenkamp and Frau Ceres, on the contrary, were sorely out of spirits; they felt like persons who have outlived their day.

Sonnenkamp compared himself to a bouquet that has not found a purchaser. What is it at evening? It is put in water through the night; the withered flowers are pulled off the next morning, and it is again exposed for sale. Will the success be any better this time? It must be tried.

The men and women, who, as long as Bella was present had been their constant associates, now saluted them formally, and joined themselves to new comers. They often met Professor Crutius in company with a number of Americans who were at the Baths, and who almost always looked curiously at Sonnenkamp. Crutius himself hardly acknowledged his friendly greetings.

The morning fixed for departure came at last; Sonnenkamp and his retinue set off in three carriages. There were fewer friends to bid them good-bye than they had expected, yet still the carriages were adorned with flowers; there was a wreath upon the roof of Sonnenkamp's coach, and even the spokes of the wheels were twined with garlands; the postilion also wore a wreath. All had the appearance of being done by friends, but was in reality the work of Lootz.

The party breakfasted in the open air, and entered the carriages quietly from the street, without returning to the house.

Professor Einsiedel was among those who came to take leave, and, drawing Manna a little apart, he said to her in a low voice, —

"I told you in my last lecture — I beg your pardon, my dear child; I forgot I was speaking only to you. I have already told you of my desire to enter a convent, but a free convent, now that I have grown weary of life in the world, am solitary, and am inclined to finish in retirement whatever I may still be able to accomplish. But whether you, my dear child, before you have done with life, should withdraw yourself from it, is a question you ought very seriously to consider; there can be no more terrible fate than to feel your soul filled with all manner of unrest when you have taken the vow to consecrate yourself to the noblest thoughts. Consider it seriously, dear child; I speak only from my interest in your welfare, my heartfelt interest," said the little man, in a voice broken with emotion.

"I know it, and I believe you," answered Manna. The tears stood in her eyes, and two big drops fell upon the flowers she held in her hand.

Roland came up to them and took off his hat to the Professor, who, laying his hand on the boy's head, said, —

"Keep on well, and remember that you too have a friend in me."

Roland was too much moved to speak; he could only kiss the old man's delicate childlike hand. The people at a distance looked on in amazement. The postilion blew his horn till he started the echoes in mountain and valley. With no decisive point gained, they left the place where they had experienced so much that was painful and pleasant.

The carriage rolled on for a long time without a word being spoken; at last Roland said softly to Eric: —

"Now I have a grandfather too."

Eric remained silent. Roland's attention was attracted by the flowers that strewed the road; not only withered flowers, but fresh bunches also that had been thrown after the departing guests, and now lay in the street to be crushed under the carriage wheels. He was reminded of Manna's complaint at the waste of flowers here, and thought how just it was.

Manna sat buried in thought. She had come to the Baths only for the sake of being with her family, yet in no one of the party had such a vital change been effected. But she did not own it yet even to herself. She silently folded her hands and prayed.

They reached the station.

"Hear the whistle of the engine!" said Roland. "I feel that we are already at home, now I hear that whistle, don't you? We seem to have been in a different world where that sound never reaches. I hope we shall find all right at home."

Eric rejoiced in Roland's animation, and told him they must keep up good courage if they did find some things changed. They would not let anything spoil the pleasure of their getting home again.

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CHAPTER XVII.

THE AFTER-EFFECTS.

"You will see the effects by-and-by," the Doctor had said to Sonnenkamp and his wife at their departure. "You will see the effect by-and-by," had been the point of the Cabinetsrath's parting words.

The Sonnenkamps returned to the Rhine, full of fresh expectations.

They arrived at the villa and found everything in excellent condition. The great corridor, connecting the green-houses with the stables, a graceful structure of cast iron which Sonnenkamp had planned before his departure, was completed, and its iron pillars already so hung with climbing plants, that no trace of its being a recent addition appeared. Sonnenkamp expressed the satisfaction he felt.

Every one felt himself animated with fresh cheerfulness. The pleasant home feeling was enhanced by the recent excitements of the journey.

Sonnenkamp asked if many strangers had visited the house and garden during his absence, for he allowed the servants every year the privilege of exhibiting to visitors, while he was at the Baths, the lower story of the villa, the hot-houses, fruit-garden, and stables.

The butler replied that there had never been so many visitors as this year, and that he had pointed out to every one the place where the Prince and Princess had sat.

Sonnenkamp ordered the man to bring him the visitor's book, which was kept in the billiard-room, a great hall adjoining the hot-houses. Strict orders were given that only names should be inscribed in the book. In an excited tone he asked, after reading a long list of names: —

"Who wrote that?"

At first no one confessed to any knowledge of the names, but finally the second gardener, the 'squirrel,' said that two gentlemen had come together, one of whom wanted once to be Roland's tutor; and the other was a tall, stately man who spoke Westphalian German. The tall man, with the light curling hair, did not write anything, but the other, whom he addressed as Professor, wrote all these names. The man remembered being struck by it at the time.

Sonnenkamp at once concluded that the man who had written the names could be no other than Professor Crutius. The names were those of the leaders of the slave party in the Southern States. It was out of the question that these men had been there themselves; but what meant this reminder of them?

The matter disturbed Sonnenkamp for a while, but he finally succeeded in dismissing it from his mind.

"Your old enemy," he said almost aloud to himself, "has come back, and that is nothing but your unhappy brooding imagination."

Eric himself had no greater pleasure in embracing his mother again, than Roland and Manna felt.

"You and Aunt Claudine," cried Roland, "are dearer to me than all the trees in the park, the house, and everything else. You too have been staying here faithfully, waiting for us to come home. How good it is to have you here, that we may have some one to receive us when we come back!"

The boy's whole heart swelled with inward happiness.

Manna said nothing, but her look showed how deeply she felt the peaceful influence of the two ladies. She found in this little home some of the rest she had found in the convent, and yet here no outward vows had been taken; these two women were completely free. By little and little, she told the mother about Professor Einsiedel, and rejoiced her by showing her appreciation of the deep consecration of spirit to which this student of science had attained.

Sonnenkamp was more thoughtful than ever. This striving after a title seemed to him a loss of independence, a loss that he was voluntarily incurring. He returned from the Baths with the impression, that he should be always treated by the nobles themselves as a stranger and an interloper, and would always have to be on his guard against misconstruction of his smallest actions. The words of the Banker rang in his ears: Every one should hold fast to the distinction of being a self-made man.

Was it not better that a man should be the source of his own honor, than that he should allow it to be conferred upon him by another?

Here he was brought up before an insurmountable wall. He was vexed at having to worry and brood so over the matter, yet he could not dismiss it from his mind. He had just come to the resolution of begging the Cabinetsrath to give it all up, when he received a letter from him, saying that the matter might be considered as in a fair way of being satisfactorily concluded.

Sonnenkamp looked about him when he had read the words. Now he had it in his grasp, and he would throw it from him. There would be more greatness, more satisfaction, in that than accepting it. But

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then what would become of Frau Ceres, Manna, and Roland? How could he draw back? For a moment the thought passed through his mind that he would sell all his property here and remove to Switzerland, France, or Italy. But he imagined the longing he would feel to be back here again; he felt that the social position and consideration to which he had grown accustomed here, had become a necessity to him. He walked among the trees which he had planted, which he had trained and cared for, and felt that they had grown to be a part of himself; he looked towards the Rhine, and was conscious of that magic power of attraction which takes possession of every one who has once made his home beside it.

Forward! he cried to himself. The ball has been set rolling and must reach its goal!

He read the letter again, and perceived that the Jewish banker had applied for a title at the same time with himself, but, strange to say, had withdrawn his name. The letter also said that an expression of opinion from Herr Weidmann was expected, and as it was not sure how he would view the case, it would be desirable for Herr Sonnenkamp to cultivate a closer acquaintance with him.

Another point in the letter gave Sonnenkamp cause for wonder; the Cabinetsrath, with many charges of secresy, wrote that the opinion of Count Wolfsgarten had been most plainly spoken, but that a remark of his had decided the case in Herr Sonnenkamp's favor.

Here were too many riddles. Sonnenkamp resolved to do nothing for the present. He had been kept waiting so long that others might as well take their turn at it.

The Doctor came and reviewed the family. He thought that all had been benefited by the Baths, but that Herr Sonnenkamp was still feeling too much the exciting effects of the life there.

The Doctor had felt the pulse of each one, and reviewed them all, but that did not tell him the changes that had taken place in their souls.

Frau Ceres was as tired and bored as ever, and thought it terrible to come back to having nothing to hear of but the beauties of nature.

Manna could hardly believe that she had been through so much noise and excitement.

The most opposite effects, however, had been produced upon Roland and Eric.

Eric had to acknowledge that Professor Einsiedel's warnings had been just. In this life of dissipation, of constant devotion to others, his own self was getting lost. He wished now to hedge in a certain enclosure about himself that he could devote to study, and in which he could build up his own life anew. He set Roland solitary tasks, and in reply to his questions often gave evasive and unsatisfactory answers, telling him that he wanted to leave him to work out as many questions as he could by himself.

Roland for the first time felt deserted by Eric, and at a time, too, when he needed him more than ever. The idle life at the Baths, the excitement, the gaieties, the constant intercourse with men and women who openly expressed their admiration for him, all this left in his heart, as soon as the first feeling of delight in getting home had passed away, a void, a restless craving, which made the quiet of the house, the regular routine of study, an intolerable burden to him. He wanted to be away among people again, among his comrades.

The Cadet told him that he had been made an ensign, and should soon make him a visit, with some of his comrades.

Roland kept impatiently looking out for some diversion, some excitement. A remark of the long lieutenant, that he ought no longer to be under the rule of a tutor, rose to his mind, and made him fret under his want of freedom.

In this frame of mind he sought his father, and asked if the title of nobility had not been received yet. Sonnenkamp comforted him as well as he could from day to day, but, happening to tell him once that Eric knew of what was in anticipation, Roland was filled with anger. Why had Eric never said a word to him about it?

Eric's mother became conscious of the change in Roland long before Eric himself did, but he perceived it at last, and laid aside his own work. But his efforts to regain his old influence over his pupil seemed for a time quite fruitless. An unexpected event was to come to his assistance.

The Major came one day with a request, that Sonnenkamp would allow the Free Masons to have an entertainment in the newly finished armory of the castle, as Herr Weidmann was desirous of having the fête come off there. Sonnenkamp's first impulse was to consent, feeling some surprise at the extraordinary coincidence that should lead Weidmann to enter into communication with him just at this time. Unwilling to appear too eager to oblige, however, he asked why Herr Weidmann had not made the request himself.

This seemed to embarrass the Major somewhat, for he could not explain that the suggestion had originated with himself, and

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that Weidmann had sharply refused to have any dealings with Sonnenkamp.

Sonnenkamp asked if he might be informed of the names of the persons in the neighborhood who belonged to the body, and found, upon looking over the list the Major handed him, that there were not enough names of consideration among them; even Herr von Endlich having withdrawn his, since his elevation to the ranks of the nobility. Sonnenkamp therefore declined, but requested the Major to bring about, in some way, a nearer acquaintance between himself and Weidmann.

"I know an excellent way," said the Major. "Herr Weidmann is very desirous of receiving a visit from Roland and Eric. Send them to him."

This, too, Sonnenkamp declined, thinking it not his place to make advances towards a man who kept aloof as Weidmann did. The following day, as he was riding, he almost dropped the bridle from his hand, on meeting a carriage in which sat Weidmann, and, beside him, a man who ought to be on the other side of the ocean.

The man was remarkably tall, and had a strikingly fresh and youthful appearance. As Sonnenkamp rode by, Weidmann bowed. His companion seemed surprised, but raised his hat also, and in so doing showed a head which could not be mistaken. The thick, wavy hair, the high forehead, the kindly expression, in the glance of the blue eyes, were all unmistakable. Sonnenkamp could not help looking back, to make sure that he had not been deceived. The stranger in the wagon also had risen and was looking back, and Sonnenkamp's eye detected something like a nod, such as a man might make who found his suspicions confirmed.

Sonnenkamp reined in his horse, feeling weak and paralyzed, as if he could no longer keep his seat in the saddle. Yes, 'tis he! 'Tis his deadly enemy, his most violent antagonist! How happens he here now? He listened until he no longer heard the rattling of the wheels, and then turned and walked his horse towards home. But shortly after, gathering up the reins, and whipping and spuring his black steed, he rode toward the Major's.

He did not find him at home. Fräulein Milch, whom he always disliked, was there, and told him that the Major was at the castle.

He rode to the castle, and in a very natural way spoke of a visitor at Weidmann's. The Major stated that Weidmann's nephew, Doctor Fritz had been there now for a short time, having come to take away his child, who had been at Mattenheim under Knopf's instruction.

"Was this visitor at the villa while I was away?" asked Sonnenkamp.

"Yes, indeed, he and Professor Crutius. Both of 'em were highly delighted with the beauty of your house, and your skill in gardening. The seeds I bought of the head-gardener are for Dr. Fritz, who 'll take them to America. Send Eric and Roland to Mattenheim; 'twill be delightful to both of 'em to know the excellent Doctor Fritz, but you must do it speedily, for I hear he's going away very soon."

Eric and Roland, fortunately, came just at this moment to the castle, and the Major took great satisfaction in spurring them up to make at last the visit to Weidmann. Roland was highly delighted that there was some diversion in prospect, that he was to make a journey and break in upon the humdrum life; and Eric hoped that Roland would receive a new impulse from observing a life of active usefulness.

This time, Sonnenkamp laid his plans more prudently. With Clodwig, Eric had brought nothing to pass, although he had had a direct commission; but now he gave Eric instructions which appeared very natural under the circumstances, but which would enable him to gain a knowledge of everything which it was important for himself to know. Eric was to send a message after several days, and then Sonnenkamp would come for him at Mattenheim. In the mean time he wanted to make a carriage-journey to another part of the country.

In the morning, when Eric and Roland were setting out for Mattenheim, Manna concluded to make her long delayed call upon the Priest. Fräulein Perini had said in direct terms, that the Priest had expressed his surprise at her not having been to see him since her return home. Fräulein Perini wanted Manna to hear from herself, that she had been at the Priest's; but of course, she did not inform her that she had given to the Priest a very circumstantial account of their residence at Carlsbad.

Manna had no sooner entered the Priest's house, than she wanted to turn back again immediately, for she learned from the housekeeper that the Dean from the capital was on a visit to the Priest. But the latter must have heard her when she arrived, for he came out and led her by the hand into the study. He introduced her to the Dean as a postulant.

Manna did not know what he meant; and the Dean, perceiving this, explained to her that he knew of her pure purpose to take the veil.

Manna cast down her eyes timidly and humbly, while she was obliged to listen to

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her praises from both of the men. She could not help herself, and yet she experienced a deep internal conflict.

The Dean asked if there had been any high dignitary of the Church at the springs, and Manna said that there had not.

When the Priest now asked if she had become acquainted with any men of distinguished attainments, Manna considered it her duty to mention particularly Professor Einsiedel.

"Then you have made the acquaintance of that incarnate, shrivelled up darkness — that miserable mannikin, who is fond of being styled an ancient Greek?"

Both of the men laughed, and Manna was amazed to see how the Professor, so highly venerated by her, was made a complete laughing stock. She did not feel adequate to defend him here, and kept silence. "We will accompany you home," said the Priest at last. "You, my honored fellow laborer, must see for once the beautiful villa."

Escorted by the two ecclesiastics Manna went home, appearing to herself like a captured criminal, and yet the men were very friendly and confiding.

They met Sonnenkamp in the courtyard. He was very complaisant and respectful; and he took especial satisfaction in showing to the highly venerated men the park, the orchard, the hot-houses, and, finally, the villa.

The Dean exhibited a fine appreciation of everything, and when Sonnenkamp dwelt upon the fact, with a certain degree of pride, that every fire-place had its own separate flue, he all at once noticed that the Dean exchanged a passing glance with the Priest, at the same time wearing a satisfied smile.

Ho, ho! thought Sonnenkamp. You think that, do you? These men are taking a view of the villa, in order already to make their dispositions how to turn this house into a convent, when Manna has carried out her plan? Ho, ho! I would rather burn up the house and everything in it!

The two ecclesiastics could not understand why the expression of Sonnenkamp's countenance was so suddenly changed and so exultant; he was delighted to penetrate the deception of other people. He bore the men company as far as the gate, and begged them to visit his modest house very frequently.

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BOOK XI. CHAPTER I.

A FAIRY STORY AT THE AGRICULTURAL FAIR.

Eric and Roland walked inland over the hills, keeping step together.

There is no better time for a pedestrian journey, than some bright day of the early autumn; the cows are pasturing in the meadows, the vegetable products are being harvested in the fields, the foliage assumes variegated colors on the trees, and all day there is a dewy, morning, or rather, evening freshness in the air, for the evening of summer is now coming on. All nature appears sated, and like one who has accomplished his work.

Eric and Roland wandered on, as if they must so wander on forever, with no rest, no goal, always keeping step. And yet they had a goal, Eric especially. Roland had never yet seen a life of active endeavor, and now he was to be made acquainted with one.

Eric related to him, as they were going along, his own life-history, but in a wholly different way from his narration to Clodwig, and afterwards to Sonnenkamp, dwelling principally upon the failure of his military career. This must have its influence upon Roland.

Eric had the feeling that this was the last journey he should make with Roland; and the latter confirmed this feeling when he related that Pranken had already bespoken a uniform for him; late in the autumn he would enter the military school.

Roland also spoke particularly, for the first time, of Knopf, the teacher at Mattenheim. He frankly said that before he entered a different course of life, he should like to become reconciled with him. And Eric now learned how deeply Roland had wounded his former tutor. He and a former valet, who had been the instigator, had cut off the beard on one side of Knopf's face, while he was asleep; he sincerely regretted this now, and wanted to acknowledge it to Herr Knopf.

And so this journey had a variety of ends in view.

They were all the time going farther away from the Rhine, and the country had a poorer look. They now met cows decked with gay ribbons; hogs and sheep, and also choice products of the fields, were carried along, arranged in excellent order.

"What's going on?"

"It's the District Agricultural Fair at Mattenheim."

They reached the village at a short distance from Weidmann's property; it was adorned with flags, and peasants stood in their wagons decorated with garlands, and imitated in sport their different occupations.

Here was one wagon with threshers, another with reapers, and others with weavers, vine-dressers, shinglers, and woodcutters; every sort of heavy work had been turned for once into play. The horses and oxen that were harnessed to the wagons wore garlands and ribbons, and everybody was shouting, rejoicing, and welcoming the fresh arrivals.

They entered the village.

Flags were streaming from the Rathhaus; they said that Weidmann was there delivering a discourse.

They went in.

In the great hall Weidmann was standing behind a table, and giving to the people a scientific and at the same time a perfectly comprehensible and directly practical essay on the best method of "making flesh;" for such was the term he continually used in speaking of feeding. "Making flesh" was his constantly recurring theme; and he pointed out the different kinds and quantities of food, how roots and oil-cakes must be alternated and supplied so as to give the most nourishment, laying a special emphasis upon the necessity of accurate calculation in order to receive the proper returns.

He had a thermometer in his stable, and the heat there was never allowed to be above 63 1–2° Fahrenheit; he had also a telegraphic clock which communicated from the stable to his study, so that he could know, to a minute, whether the servants foddered the cattle at the proper time.

He represented to the people how much better off they were with a small amount of landed property, for they could have it all under their own eye, while he had to be at the mercy of hired laborers; and one could know very well when Monday came, for on Sunday there was always bad foddering. Each cow has its own name, and a register is kept of the amount of milk from each, and any one that does not come up to the requisite standard to yield a profit is got rid of.

He repeated to his hearers often, how, within the circuit of a few miles, more than a million was thrown away by cutting the grass too late, and not getting it in until it had become dead ripe. And he succeeded in setting all this off in a humorous way.

If he had occasion to show that his method was profitable pecuniarily, he would strike his hand upon his pantaloons' pocket, and say:—

"Then there's something goes in here."

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There was much merriment when he illustrated with his hand the remark: —

"Profit — profit is the whole story. Just look at this! The human hand moves its fingers inward towards us, not outwards to give away."

He was strongly opposed to pasturing in common; and everything went to show that people were foolish and wasteful, since they would not understand how to procure good food for themselves by means of their cattle.

Roland listened with astonishment, wondering at this man's sphere of influence, who showed such zeal in teaching people how to feed themselves well.

Eric also had something to think about; for when Weidmann declared that the particular breed was not of so much account, that the food of animals was a far more vital matter than what blood they were of, Eric cast down his eyes. Perhaps he made a particular application of the remark.

When the address was over, Eric and Roland were warmly welcomed by Herr Weidmann; and on Eric's expressing his satisfaction at the address, Weidmann said:

"I was intended once for a parson, and the son of a parson still sticks to me."

Eric replied, smiling: —

"There are so many who preach about spirit, that it is well for you, for once, to preach about flesh."

Weidmann answered very seriously: — "But I do not at all deny the spirit; it is even incomprehensible to me how people can manage not to believe in a God. I find traces of him everywhere. But we will speak of this by and by. Let us go."

The audience went out into the street, where the procession was now passing along. First came the fire-companies of that and the neighboring villages, fine fresh-looking young fellows in drab linen clothes, with gleaming, yellow helmets on their heads.

"This is a new order of things," Eric said to Weidmann.

Weidmann rejoined, nodding: — "Yes, no age before ours has had the like, and who knows what will come of it!"

Now the wagons came along with their merry occupants, and occasionally the female hemp-dressers would scatter chopped straw upon the gazing crowd. New wine was handed out from the wagon, and a joyous hilarity was everywhere seen. Weidmann again welcomed his guests, saying that he would take them home with him at evening, and that Herr Knopf would be particularly delighted. He introduced them also to his nephew, Dr. Fritz, adding that Herr Knopf held himself back for the dance.

They next proceeded to the fair-grounds, where the prizes were being awarded, and Weidmann took his guests to the exhibition of agricultural implements. He pointed out that there was no perfect shovel and no perfect plough, and commended the plan of distributing the improved implements by lot among the people.

"It is difficult," he declared, "to get the peasant to adopt any new invention; the husbandman cannot be an innovator, he must not be; he is to be the representative of the conservative element, and yet he must keep pace with the progress of the new age. This is difficult, and great patience is needed."

He spoke of a long cherished plan he had entertained of sending out agricultural missionaries, or rather, of making missionaries out of some of the peasants themselves; for the peasantry always had a prejudice against a man who made use of learned words.

Roland went into the exhibition, and round among the multitude, as if he were suddenly transported into a wholly new world. Here was a man, living only a few hours' distance from Villa Eden, who was laboring with such zeal and such devotion, in order to supply good nourishment to his fellow human beings. And what are we trying to do? Something of this was apparent when he said to Eric: —

"Herr Weidmann has a noble calling, even if he does speak a great deal about manure."

Among all those who were shouting and rejoicing, there was not one so happy as Eric was, when he heard his pupil say this. This acknowledgment,— that none of the material substances on which human activity was employed were impure, if one considered the real thought thereby unfolded,— this was a result far beyond his expectation. He congratulated himself on having come here; here must Roland find his true vocation, he must devote himself to agriculture, for in that there is a direct means of benefiting the many.

"You must see my pigs," urged Weidmann, "Yorkshire pigs, six weeks old, splendid creatures! Have you too an antipathy to pigs? I can very easily imagine it. But, my young friend, of the meat that goes for food in our country, seventy per cent. is pork, twenty per cent. beef and veal, and only ten per cent. mutton, lamb, fowl, game, etc., is eaten."

The Yorkshire pigs were, in fact, very pretty-looking animals.

Roland did not go to see them, but remained a long time looking at the so-called Hercules' Clubs, or the Serpent's Gourds,

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as they are also termed, a huge growth, half as long as a man, and double the thickness of his arm.

The prizes were awarded, the rejoicing of the people became tumultuous, and it was a continual delight to Eric to point out to his pupil, that this was a festival got up by the people themselves, and was established neither by Church nor State. Weidmann, who heard something of this, added smiling: —

"Yes, this is our new self-government in all matters, high and low. We have no overseers, neither consecrated nor unconsecrated."

The sun shone down brightly upon the lively scene of joyous festivity, and Roland, standing upon the now empty platform, said to Eric: —

"If my father were only here! Suppose now that to each one of the multitude here, all of them,— how many do you think there are?"

"At least a thousand."

"A thousand persons," he repeated. "Then, if one should give this very minute a thousand gulden to each one of them?"

"This would be very well for a day, a year, or even several years, but not for life. You have been told that the way to help people is, to put good tools into their hands, and good tools into their souls, so that they may get their own living — that's the thing."

"Yes, yes, it was only a dream," said Roland, and his countenance fell.

Why had Eric not shared with him in the joy of this dream?

It was time for them to go to the dance; they heard the sound of music. They entered the Raven Inn, where a green garland was hanging outside, and inside, peasants and peasant girls were dancing merrily. On a little platform among the musicians there was a man playing the flute, who nodded to them as they came in; it was Knopf. Roland seized Eric's hand, trembling, and pointing to a table covered with a red cloth where several well-dressed people were sitting, he cried: —

"There she is! There she is!"

A child of slender form, and of a blooming, rosy countenance, with long, flowing hair, was standing on the knee of a handsome, powerfully built man, with a massive head, who was addressed as Doctor Fritz.

Knopf gave a signal to the trumpeter near him, and the dance ceased. He came down, and shook Eric and Roland by the hand. Tears stood in his eyes under his huge spectacles, and fell upon the glasses, so that he had to doff his spectacles, and look at the new-comers with blinking eyes.

"You come at a good time, at the best. We are celebrating the District Fair."

"Forgive me," exclaimed Roland.

"I did that a long while ago. Dear — you have grown very tall. Come with me."

He conducted them to the large table, and introduced Eric to Frau Weidmann. And another person, who was sitting behind the table, shook Eric and Roland by the hand; it was the Russian, who was now living with Weidmann as a pupil. Weidmann's two sons, Dr. Fritz, from America, and his child, were also introduced. Roland and the maiden gazed at each other as if they were in a dream.

"Father, this is the Forest-prince whom I saw," said the maiden to the handsome, strongly-built man.

Her voice made Roland look round; so would the lilies of the valley have rung out their soft tones, if their little bells could have emitted any sound.

The adventure in the wood was now gaily narrated, and Knopf was especially delighted.

"Miracles still take place! Miracles still take place!" he kept exclaiming, flourishing at the same time his flute. "But now, children, follow me; do not speak — not a single word. Roland can dance, and you can dance too, Lilian. I beg you would be quiet!" he cried aloud to the assembly. "Our children are going to dance — our children are going to dance by themselves."

He stationed himself again on the platform, and played a waltz on his flute; the children danced, and all eyes were fixed upon them, as if it were a fairy spectacle.

Roland and Lilian had not yet spoken a word, and they had so much to say to each other; but they were dancing together. Who knows how long Knopf would have kept on playing, had not Dr. Fritz called out: —

"That'll do for the present, Herr Candidate!" Knopf flinched; the word candidate, in the midst of this fairy tale, seemed to annoy him, it sounded so horribly prosaic.

Roland and Lilian took their seat with the others at the table. Knopf exhorted Lilian to give her partner something to drink, but Frau Weidmann insisted upon the children's waiting awhile before they drank. They sat quietly, looking at each other without speaking.

Eric begged that his coming should make no interruption in their plans, but Weid-

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mann declared that he wanted to leave, at any rate; he had already been obliged to answer hundreds of questions. Frau Weidmann regretted that the best rooms in the house were already occupied, and that Eric and Roland would have to put up with such poor accommodations.

"Don't be uneasy," interposed Weidmann; "all women, even the best, make apologies for their housekeeping, however good it may be."

The whole company adjourned from the table to the courtyard, Dr. Fritz leading his little daughter by the hand; and now it was learned that he and his child were going to start the next day for America.

Knopf took Roland's arm, and Eric walked between Weidmann and his wife; the Russian had gone out into the fields with a son of Weidmann, while the second accompanied Dr. Fritz. Frau Weidmann could not forbear letting Eric know why her husband was so taciturn; that he devoted himself too much to other people, and then he came home all fagged out. Who knows whether he would not have taken his violin and played for the people, if Eric had not come?

Weidmann declared that he had done this, and was not at all ashamed of it.

Eric replied that it was exceedingly painful to see how often it was that one was almost ashamed of manifesting any good feeling in the world, because so many merely pretended to possess it, and only used it as a means of acquiring popularity.

Weidmann made mention of Eric's office in the House of Correction, adding that the man who played the key-bugle had been a convict formerly, and had conducted himself well for years.

Frau Weidmann, who was of the opinion that talking was too much of an exertion for her husband at present, now resumed the thread of conversation, and asked Eric whether it was a settled matter that Pranken was to marry the rich Sonnenkamp's daughter.

Eric could not keep saying yes, and Frau Weidmann was exceedingly vexed.

"It always puts me out," she said, "when a healthy and wealthy girl of the middle class marries a nobleman; our good, solid, industrial acquisitions are alienated. I do not wish to say that the noble is not our friend; but he does not belong to us, he considers himself something different from us, and the fruit of our toil goes to him. A girl of the middle class, who buys a title by marriage, betrays her ancestors, and betrays us in her posterity."

Frau Weidmann spoke so excitedly and angrily, that her husband tried in vain to pacify her; he took, however, the wrong means, informing her that Herr Sonnenkamp himself wanted to receive a title.

Eric was startled to hear this matter, which had been regarded as a great secret, here spoken of so openly.

Frau Weidmann had a special dislike towards Pranken; she disliked him because he induced so many people to place good breeding, as it was termed, above plain uprightness. You could hear hundreds of persons, women as well as men, speak well of him in spite of his vicious life, because he was so well bred, as they called it.

"Suppose Manna had come here?" thought Eric to himself.

Weidmann turned to Eric with the explanation that his wife was pretty severe against Pranken, as two years ago, about the time that Eric had taken the position at Sonnenkamp's, Pranken had spent a few days at Mattenheim, and in that short time had introduced a disorderly state of things at the farm, which was not without its effects even at the present time.

CHAPTER II.

A PEBBLE ANSWERS FOR A JEWEL.

KNOPF, meanwhile, talked much with Roland, and congratulated him in having a man like Eric for a teacher. Roland was as inattentive as ever, asking at last only this question, —

"What is the maiden's name?"

"Lilian. And this is the miraculous part of it! You gave her in the wood a Mayflower, and the Mayflower is also called Lily of the Valley."

"What's her father?"

"A famous lawyer, a leading opponent of slavery."

Knopf would rather have given himself a slap on the mouth, than to have uttered what he did. But it couldn't be unsaid. He turned suddenly and looked sharply at Roland, and, to his satisfaction, he became convinced that no effect had been produced upon the youth.

During the whole distance they seemed to be hearing the music of the waltz, and now, as they approached the farm, that ceased, for there struck upon their ears the rushing and roaring of a mill-stream and the clattering of a mill. The stream flowed underneath a large part of the house, and turned the mill constructed there.

"You will not sleep well to-night," said Knopf to Roland.

"Why not?"

"Because you must first get used to the noise of the mill; if one is accustomed to

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it, he sleeps the more soundly for it. It was so with my little pupil."

Not far from the farm buildings, the different individuals, meeting again, were standing near the palings of an inclosure, where Roland was delighted with the handsome colts that were frisking about within, and which all came up to the fence when they sniffed Herr Weidmann's proximity.

He informed them that this was his "little children's school;" he had established a "coltgarten" for colts, to which all the breeders of horses in the district sent the foals. There was good pasture-land, where they could perform their gymnastic exercises, be well-sheltered and safely cared for. This helped the whole surrounding country in the rearing of horses.

Roland was highly pleased with this information, and Eric took fresh satisfaction in the thought of having brought him here. A man like Weidmann would exert an influence over Roland such as no other person could.

"Have you studied chemistry?" Weidmann asked, turning to Roland.

He said no.

Weidmann looked down, then up, and asked, —

"Have you determined yet what you mean to do?"

For the first time, Roland hesitated to give a direct answer.

Weidmann urged the matter no further. Eric could not conceive what made Roland so timid; but he saw clearly what a great influence this man had acquired over his pupil. Perhaps also what Roland had heard caused him to waver, and he was reluctant to speak, before a man of such active usefulness, of a vocation in which outward show and glory were the ends in view.

But there was another reason. The child with golden hair let go her father's hand, went up to Knopf and whispered to him, that now he must be convinced all was true she had told him; that he had never believed she had met any one in the wood, but now the witness was before his eyes.

Roland whispered to Knopf, that Eric had never been disposed to believe that such a thing had really happened to him.

Knopf, who saw himself placed in the midst of wonder-land, moved his hand repeatedly over his breast, while his eyes gleamed behind his spectacles. Yes, in the very midst of chemistry, scientific feeding, locomotive whistles, and dividend calculations — in the midst of all this there was still romance left in the world. True, this happens only to children born on Sunday, and Lilian was a Sunday-child.

He only wished that he could do something towards deepening and making lasting this gleaming romance of their wonderful meeting.

But that's just it! One can't do anything in this sphere of the romantic, it always comes of its own accord, unexpected and surprising; it won't be regulated and reasonably built up. All one can do is, to keep still and hold his breath, and make no sound; otherwise the charm is broken. He had to do something to further it, and he did the very best thing; he went off and left the children by themselves.

They looked at each other, but neither spoke. A handsome red heifer, with a bell on her neck and a garland over her horns, was led into the farm-yard. The maiden went up to her, and stroking her, said, —

"Ah, good evening, Brindy! Do you feel proud because you've taken the prize? Shall you tell your neighbors of it? Will you enjoy yourself now at home, or don't you know anything about your honors?"

The heifer was led to the barn, and the child, turning to Roland, cried, —

"Wouldn't you like to know whether the heifer has any notion of what has happened to her?"

As Roland was still silent, the child continued, very seriously, —

"Don't you want to be a husbandman, and have my uncle teach you? Then you can have my room. It's beautiful there!"

The maiden found words sooner than Roland, who still did not open his lips.

She continued, —

"Why haven't you been to see us before?"

"I did not know where you lived, nor who you were."

"Ah! That was why!"

And now they talked of their first meeting, how Lilian was carried away by her uncle, and how Roland wandered on to find Eric. Then it was spring, and now it is autumn.

"Just think! In your lilies there were some pretty little flies, which went along with us in the carriage, and didn't stir."

"Have you kept the flowers?"

"No. I don't like withered flowers. Give me something — give me something, that doesn't wither."

"I have nothing," replied Roland. "But I will send you my photograph, taken as a page — no. That's not fit for you. Oh, if I only had my rings now! I should like to give a ring, but Herr Eric has taken them all off my fingers."

"I don't want any ring. Well, give me

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that — give me the pebble that's now under your foot."

Roland stooped down, and giving her the pebble, begged she would also give him one.

She did so, saying, —

"Yes, this is dearer to me. I'd rather have that than anything else. Now I shall take a part of Germany with me over the ocean. Oh, Herr Knopf is right; it is all one whether you have a pebble or a diamond, if you only hold it dear; and it's very stupid for people to wear pearls and think that it's something very fine, because they must be got away down deep in the sea. Herr Knopf is right; it doesn't make a thing beautiful or good to cost a great deal."

Roland was silent; his heart beat fast.

"You are the Roland then, of whom the good Herr Knopf is always talking? You can't think how much he loves you."

"Probably he loves you as much?"

"Yes, he loves me too, and he has promised to come to America to see us."

"I am from America, too."

"Ah, yes! Welcome, my dear countryman; come with me into the garden, and help me get a nosegay to take away with me to-morrow."

"But where are you going to-morrow?"

"Very early we start for home."

The children were confronted, as it were, by a riddle. These children of the New World met each other to welcome the arrival in the Old World, and now to bid each other farewell.

"We see one another only to say a welcome and a good-bye," said Roland.

"Come into the garden with me," replied Lilian.

CHAPTER III.

AN HOUR IN PARADISE.

The children walked about the garden and gathered flowers, and they seemed to be in fairy land. They went first into the vegetable garden, where dwarf pear-trees were set out at regular intervals, and Lilian, thinking that she must explain everything to the visitor, in a matronly manner, said: —

"Yes, yes, there's no rose-bush, no little tree, which my aunt has not budded, and she hates all vermin. Now just think what aunt reckons as vermin! But you musn't laugh at her for it."

"What? Tell me."

"She considers the birds vermin, too. Oh, you laugh exactly like my brother Hermann. Laugh once more! Yes, he laughs exactly so. But my brother has been in business for three years. Come, we'll look for some flowers now."

They went into the flower garden and gathered many different kinds of flowers, but Lilian threw a large bunch of them into the brook, and pleased herself with thinking how the flowers would float down to the Rhine, and from the Rhine to the sea, and who knows but they would go straight to New York, even before she got there herself!

"I shall come to America, too, to see you," Roland all at once exclaimed.

"Give me your hand that you will."

For the first time, the children took each other by the hand.

A shot was heard behind them. Roland trembled.

"Just be quiet. Are you really frightened?" Lilian said, soothingly. "It's aunt; she's only frightening away the sparrows; she fires every time she comes into the orchard. A pistol is always lying upon the table yonder."

Roland now saw Frau Weidmann putting the discharged pistol down on the table.

"We'll be perfectly quiet, so that she won't hear us," he said to Lilian.

They sat down on the margin of the brook, and Lilian whispered: —

"The mignonettes I'll keep, they smell so sweet, even after they're wilted."

"Yes," Roland rejoined, "give me a mignonette too, and as often as we smell them, we will think of each other. The field-guard Claus, told me once — he's a real bee-father — that the mignonette yields the most honey."

O all his knowledge, nothing else now occurred to him.

"You are very clever!" exclaimed the child. "Now tell me, do you think, too, that the bees smell the flowers as we do, and that the flowers put on such pretty colors so that the bees and the insects may come to them and be friendly with them? Just think! Herr Knopf says so. Oh, what a tiny little nose a bee must have! And I've often seen that the humble-bee isn't very smart; it flies up to a flower twice, three times, and it might know that there was no honey there. The humble-bee's stupid, but the honey-bees, they are the prettiest creatures in the world. Don't you love them more than anything else?"

"No, I love horses and hounds more."

"And only think," Lilian went on, "that the bees never hurt me nor uncle, but aunt has to take care. Have you ever caught a swarm?"

"No."

"If you're ever a great, rich gentleman,

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you must get some bees too. But the bees do well only in a family where there's peace; Herr Knopf told me so. And when we start to-morrow, my father's going to take a bee-hive with him. Ah, if we can only take it safe to the New World; 'twould be frightful if all the good bees had to die on the way. But 'twill be very nice when they wake up in America, and fly away, and see wholly different trees there."

"Is it really true that you're going away to-morrow?"

"Yes, my father has said so, and when he's said it, there's nothing can hinder; you may be just as sure of it as that the sun will rise. My father, uncle, and Herr Knopf have talked about you a great deal."

"About me?"

"Yes, they've wondered ever so much what you're going to do. Are you really worth so many hundred millions?"

"Yes, Lilian, all the money in the whole world is mine."

"Ah, what do you say! you must think I'm a goose; I'm not so simple as all that. But what do you mean to be?"

"A soldier."

"Oh, that's nice; then you'll come over to us, and help kill all the people dead who keep slaves. My father and uncle say 'twill be done soon. Ah, if 'twere only now as 'twas in the old times, then we'd go away together into the great forest, far off into the world, and then we'd come to a castle where there were only wee-bit, tiny dwarfs, and there'd be one hermit, a good man with a snow-white beard, whom all the animals in the wood loved — and Herr Knopf might be just such a hermit — yes he's to be our hermit, and he'll be named Emil Martin. Come, we'll call him after this brother Martin."

Thus the children amused each other, and Roland again asked, —

"Why must you go away so soon as to-morrow?"

"And why must you stay here any longer?" answered Lilian.

"I must stay with my parents."

"And I with mine. Ah, you've a beard already," cried the child, pulling suddenly the down on his lip.

"That hurts; you've pulled out a couple of hairs, and I'm proud of them."

"You're proud of them then?"

And she tenderly stroked his face, pronouncing at the same time a so-called healing-spell, which she had learned of Knopf for the healing of a wound.

"Have you the dog still?" asked Lilian.

"Yes, he must have gone with Eric. Where is he, I wonder?"

He whistled, and Griffin came up. Lilian caressed the dog, and kissed him, and said all kinds of loving words to him.

"I'll give the dog to you," said Roland.

"See," cried the child, "he's looking at you; he knows he's to be handed over to another master, just as a slave is. But, Roland, I can't take the dog with me. I mustn't say anything to father about it. Only think how much trouble we should have before we reached New York; you'd better keep him."

Roland had been lost in thought; now he asked abruptly, —

"Have you ever seen any slaves?"

"No, when they come to us they aren't slaves any longer. But I've seen many who've been slaves — one is a friend of father's, and father goes through the streets with him, arm in arm."

"Come here, Griffin," she said breaking off, "here's something for you."

She gave the dog a piece of sweet biscuit she had in her pocket, which he ate, licking his lips as he stood calmly gazing at the distant landscape.

For some time the children were silent, and then Lilian again asked, —

"Well, what are you going to do with the ever so many millions, when you're a man?"

"What makes you ask me that?"

"Oh, uncle and Herr Knopf have often talked about what you were going to do with them — and do you know what they said?"

"No. What would you do, if you had so much money?"

"I? I'd buy ever so many pretty clothes, real gold and silver clothes, and then — well then — then I'd build a splendid church, and everybody would have to be beautifully dressed, and when they came home, they'd have nice things to eat. And you'll do all this, won't you? or you'll tell me what you mean to do."

"I don't know."

"But you are to be something great. Ah, to be rich, pooh! Uncle says that's nothing."

"Have you ever seen a million?" asked the child again. "I'd like to see a million for once. The whole room, clear up to the top, would be full of rolls of gold — no, I shouldn't like that. Tell me now, have you a little sister?"

"No, she's a year older than I."

"And is she beautiful too?"

Lilian did not wait for the answer; she beckoned to Roland to keep quiet, for just then a lady-bug ran over her hand. She

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placed the little creature on its back, saying, —

"Look, now it's kicking, it can't help itself — there, now, its little wings are under its back, and with them it has got up again, all by itself. Hi! it's off. 'Twill have a long story to tell when it gets home. Ah, it will say, There was a great animal that had five legs on its hand — my fingers must appear to it like legs, and when it eats supper to-night it eats with ——"

"Tell me, aren't you hungry too? I'm hungry."

"What are you doing there?" suddenly called out a woman's loud voice. "Come into the house."

Lilian's aunt had made her appearance behind the children, and they had to go with her to the house.

Lilian saw Roland's frightened expression, and with the idea that he must certainly be thinking of the wicked woman in the story, who eats the children up in the wood, she said in a low tone, —

"Aunt won't do us any harm; instead, we'll get something very nice to-night, great pancakes and leeks. Don't you see a leek in her hand, which she has just cut? That's for the pancakes."

Roland and Lilian accompanied Frau Weidmann into the house.

CHAPTER IV.

VOCATION AND FATHER-LAND.

While the children had been dreaming and chattering together in the garden, the men had gone into the house. They stepped into the large wainscoted entrance-hall, where a great many withered wreaths were suspended. Weidmann pointed out to Eric that forty-two of these belonged to him, for that was the number of harvests he had worked in here.

The single wreath hanging by itself was the fiftieth one of his father-in-law, which had been placed upon his grave. Weidmann nodded as Eric said:—

"This is a decoration which cannot be purchased, which one can acquire only for himself."

Eric was glad to point this out to Roland.

They entered the sitting-room on the ground-floor. It was spacious and comfortable, with pleasant seats in the window-recesses, and chairs and tables scattered about here and there.

"We live on the ground-floor in the summer," said Weidmann to Eric; "every thing can be overlooked here better. After the leaves have fallen, we remove to the upper story for the winter."

The great sitting-room opened into another apartment, where the heavy damask curtain had just been drawn back. The Banker, whom Eric had become acquainted with at Carlsbad, came out of it, holding in his hand a bundle of papers, and gave him a friendly greeting, expressing his pleasure in meeting again here the man who was as intimate a friend of Clodwig's as he was himself.

A new subject was at once introduced. The Banker said that he had looked over the papers thoroughly; the public domain did not seem to be valued at too high a figure, and Weidmann must understand how it was purposed to divide it; but he believed that it would be hardly possible to extend to this new undertaking the plan of insurance which Weidmann had adopted for his laborers; that it was very questionable whether the income, for years, would be such that the life-insurance premium could be saved.

Eric learned that Weidmann paid the life-insurance premium of all his employees after they had been with him four years.

Weidmann gave a statement, in general outline, of the manner in which the so-called social question struck him as being the same as among the ancient Romans; the point of consideration was, to make free and independent cultivators of their own lands. And he laid particular stress upon the remark that this social question, however, was not to be solved as if it were merely a problem in arithmetic; that there must be a moral and social enthusiasm, and he must confess, although many would shrug their shoulders at it, that he himself was of opinion that the humane principle of Freemasonry, which had too much lost its real meaning, was to look for, and to find here, a new inspiration and application.

It was soon evident that the Banker was a brother of the order.

Eric's heart swelled as he felt obliged to say to himself, while his thoughts were carried away to the grand movements of the world:—

"Everywhere, in our day, there is an active endeavor, a care for the neighbor, for those in adverse circumstances. This is our religion, which has no temples and no established days of festive celebration, but which, everywhere and at all times, struggles for the good."

He entirely forgot where he came from, and why he came, and lived wholly in the present.

Weidmann postponed, however, the subject to another time, and asked what Roland was going to do. But before Eric

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could reply, a man came in with Dr. Fritz, to whom Eric gave a cordial reception. It was Weidmann's son-in-law, an infantry officer of high rank. The two men requested that the conversation might not be interrupted, and Weidmann repeated his question about Roland.

Eric informed them that his pupil wanted to become a soldier; he expressed his own opposition to the plan, and his desire that Roland would devote himself to science or agriculture.

Weidmann answered, smiling, that Eric was a little too hard on this mode of life, from having been a soldier; that he himself was convinced it was of essential advantage to a man to have had a soldier's training. A man became ready, resolute and self-reliant, and at the same time he was one member of a large body. Nowhere can one be taught punctuality better, or learn better what it is to command, and what to obey, than in the military service. Roland must be made to realize, however, that this soldierly life was only transitional with him, nothing that was to occupy and fill out his whole existence.

"Then he will be no true soldier," interposed Weidmann's son-in-law. "Whoever undertakes anything which he does not consider as an active employment, requiring the full energies of his life, and whoever is continually looking to some future vocation, does not plant himself firmly in the present."

"Here you agree with my old teacher, Professor Einsiedel," Eric went on. "He used to say that the worst ruler is the provisional one. It would be, therefore, important for Roland to adopt some permanent calling, and not one merely temporary. With his peculiar characteristics, it is very hard for another to determine for him; but you, Herr Weidmann, you, with the powerful impression which you and your active usefulness have made upon Roland, you would be exceedingly well adapted to give to him the decisive impulse in one particular direction which I could not do, because I have not seen clearly what is best.

"Let us take counsel together," agreed Weidmann. "We here have had a great deal of experience."

"Do you think," Eric broke in, "that a better result would come from a consultation of many, than from the quiet meditation of a single person?"

"Aha! doubt in the efficacy of parliamentarianism," said Weidmann smiling. "I can imagine it possible. I answer your question with a simple yes. What the deliberation of many settles upon is suitable for many, and a person rich like him has in himself the power of many and for many. Let us consult together."

They sat down, and the Banker began, —

"I believe it is Jean Paul who said, — If you come into a new dwelling-place, and it does not seem homelike to you, then go to work and you will begin to feel at home. I should like to extend this further. One feels at home in the world only through labor; he who does not work is homeless."

The conversation was again interrupted by the entrance of the Russian prince, Weidmann's son, and Knopf. The subject was again stated.

"We have a good council of deliberation," said Weidmann, sitting back in his chair. "You have all seen the noble-looking youth, Herr Sonnenkamp's son, and Captain Dournay has trained him so that now, we might say, he is fitted to enter upon whatever calling he may adopt. What now shall the boy do?"

"Allow me one preliminary question," interposed Knopf. "Must a rich man produce, accomplish anything himself? Is it not his task to further the production, the doing of others, whether art, science, industry, or labor, and to make himself so far familiar with it as to give such aid?"

"You wanted to answer something." Weidmann pointed to the Banker, whose features were very expressive, and who seemed to have a remark on his lips.

"Not exactly answer," responded the Banker. "I wanted, first of all, to distinguish between vocation and business. There are active pursuits which are only a business, and again there are positions which are only a vocation. This is the chief difficulty, that a person so excessively rich must have only a vocation; there is no necessity of his pursuing any business. Rich people's children degenerate, because there is no such necessity."

"What do you understand by vocation?" asked Weidmann.

"I can't at once define it."

"Then allow me to help you," said Eric. "Vocation is a natural gift, or a necessity, which we turn into a law that acts freely. The brute has no vocation, because he follows natural instinct alone."

"Very true," nodded the Banker gratefully. "One question more," he said, turning to Eric. "Hasn't your pupil, as I am sorry to say most rich men's sons have, the desire to be a cavalier, a young nobleman?"

As Eric made no answer, he continued, —

"Our misfortune is, that the sons of the rich are satisfied with being heirs, and do not want to find a means of active development for themselves."

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"As we have heard already," began Weidmann's son-in-law, "the young man wishes to become a soldier, and I believe that he ought to be encouraged in that purpose. I hope that it won't be attributed to prejudice in favor of my own calling, but I must repeat our father's view, that the military profession, more than any other, gives a certain decision of character. To have to stand ready every day with bag and baggage, scrip and scrippage, this makes one prompt and decided; this standing army becomes a fact, as it were, in each individual soldier."

"Granted," rejoined Weidmann. "But is it not to be feared that a man, who has been a soldier for the best years of his life, will be able to take up with great difficulty any other employment? He always regards himself as on furlough; and the great misfortune — I might call it the leading tendency of our time — manifests itself especially in the rich, who look upon themselves as on furlough, always on vacation."

"The best thing about it is, Roland will run through his money, and then it is scattered among the people," jokingly observed Weidmann's son, showing those impertinently white teeth that Pranken objected to so strongly.

"I would like to say one word," the Russian remarked to Knopf, who cried, —

"The Prince requests to have the floor."

Weidmann bowed to him pleasantly.

"I think that we can furnish an example in Russia. Our wealthy men are obliged to become agriculturists, whether the inheritance consists in money or goods. Why should not the young man be simply an agriculturist?"

"Agriculture has five branches," replied Weidmann, "and they ought to have their roots in five corresponding inclinations. Agriculture consists of physics, chemistry, mineralogy, botany, and zoology, and one of these, that is, the inclination to one of these sciences, and the activity growing out of it, must have its foundation in the natural bent or genius, otherwise there is no happiness in one's calling. And do you know," he turned toward the Prince, smiling, "do you know what is the first requisite for an agriculturist?"

"Money."

"No, that's the second. The first is a sound human understanding. There are far more intellectual men than there are men of genuine common sense."

The Prince nodded to Knopf, and he gave a merry nod in return.

Weidmann opposed, with a warmth that was very different from his usually composed manner, the view generally entertained of agriculture as a sort of universal refuge, to which every one could have recourse; and yet the conclusion was finally arrived at, that it would be the most suitable thing for Roland to devote himself to agriculture, in connection with other branches of industry carried out on a large scale.

The conversation broke up into groups. Knopf said to Eric, that at the present time there was no longer an Olympus where the fate of human beings could be decided, and Weidmann added, that the worst thing of all was, that Roland had nothing to expect, nothing to wish for and to obtain, and for which he must exert his energies, happy when he succeeded in his first attempt, and then girding himself immediately for another; for this is the impelling cause of all movement and progress, that what is attained becomes the seed of a new effort.

"You were right," he closed, finally turning to Eric, "we cannot provide for another in advance, least of all here. And no one can be trained to be a giver of happiness. There must be awakened within the youth a desire to associate himself with his fellow-men; he must not merely want to confer happiness, but to create something. Out of creative activity alone proceeds happiness. He must be educated both for himself and for others; he must refer everything to others, and at the same time to himself."

Dr. Fritz had taken no part in the discussion; he sat meditatively with his brows contracted.

"Why have you had nothing to say?" said Weidmann in a low tone to him, when the conversation had become general. Dr. Fritz replied in the same low tone: —

"It is hard enough to know what to do with such an enormous inheritance righteously acquired; but how much harder, with one to which guilt adheres."

Weidmann made a significant sign to his nephew, and laid his finger upon his lips, as if begging silence. Eric had heard nothing of the conversation between the two, but as he looked at them, he had a feeling, as if something transpired there which was calculated to excite alarm. He had an involuntary dread, for which he could not assign any reason.

Frau Weidmann now came in, and invited them to the table. They got up at once and proceeded to the dining-room.

Eric sat by the side of Knopf, and said to him: —

"I have a question to ask you, Herr Colleague, which you may take until tomorrow to answer."

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"What is it, pray?"

"What would you do, if you should become the possessor suddenly of many millions?"

Knopf, who had just put his glass up to his mouth, began to cough and choke so that he was forced to leave the table. He came back again after a while, but he ate and drank nothing the whole evening.

The Banker, who read a great many journals, asked Dr. Fritz if the horrible stories one reads of American life had any foundation in truth.

"Most certainly," answered Dr. Fritz—Roland looked sharply at him—"if we fix the gaze upon some individual and separate fact in the development of life in the New World, we shall often be wounded by monstrous appearances of deformity; but a very distinguished statesman once gave me a striking illustration, of which I am glad to make a wider extension. This gentleman said to me:—'I was at Munich, and there I first understood aright my fatherland. I was at the foundry where the gigantic statue of Bavaria was cast, and the different parts of the figure were lying around, here an arm, a knee, a hand, there the head and a part of the trunk, all horrible to look at in this separate condition. But when I saw the whole colossal statue set up in its place, and in all its beautiful harmony of proportions, then it occurred to me that America must be looked at in this way. The separate parts appear monstrous, but if one regards it at as a whole, it is of an unequalled beauty and grandeur."

At these words, Roland looked up at Eric with a bright, triumphant glance, and smiled.

They rose from the table. Lilian was soon put to bed, and when Dr. Fritz took leave previous to retiring, Roland retained his hand firmly, saying:—

"I thank you for having so beautifully extolled my fatherland. I shall never forget it."

"Shall you not consider Germany as your fatherland?"

"No," was Roland's loud and decided answer.

"Stay here. I have something yet to say to you," said Weidmann in a low tone to Eric.

Roland walked about with Knopf in the bright starry night, and Knopf had to promise him that he would wake him up to say good-bye to Dr. Fritz and his child. Roland then consented to go to bed, but was long in falling asleep, for the events of the day, the noise of the brook, and the clattering of the mill kept him awake. But at last weariness and youth gained the victory, and he slept soundly.

CHAPTER V.

NOCTURNAL INFORMATION, AND A FAREWELL LOST BY SLEEP.

Roland slept; he little thought that over him and his destiny two men were keeping watch in the deepest anxiety.

Eric had followed his host into the workroom, and here Weidmann asked him: "Do you know why you are sent here?"

"Sent here?"

"Yes."

"Herr Sonnenkamp wants to establish friendly relations with you, and I myself have wished for some time——"

"Good. The best spy is often the one who doesn't know that he has to be a spy, who looks on innocently and reports innocently."

"I don't understand."

"Take my word for it, Herr Sonnenkamp didn't for a moment think of coming to our house, especially as he does not yet know when Dr. Fritz leaves; his pretending to you that he was called away was quite harmless. Send a messenger, and he will send you word with his regrets that he cannot come himself, but will send the carriage. Ah! my young friend, there is no pleasure in following up the trail of the beast of prey in man. But first of all, one question. Do you know how Herr Sonnenkamp comes on in his endeavors to get a title?"

"No."

"Do you know that I have hit upon means to be relied on of forming an opinion of Herr Sonnenkamp's deserts?"

Eric expressed his ignorance, and Weidmann continued:——

"I have told you that the groom who blows the trumpet was once a convict. I have still another convict that I keep on an out of the way part of the estate, for he doesn't do well, not so much from an evil disposition, as from a spirit of braggadocio when he is amongst men. You see then that I do not reject men of criminal antecedents; for pride in our own virtue is very weak-kneed. It is, at the best, only good luck if we, by teaching and example, and with the means of subsistence assured to us, do not burden ourselves with many an ill deed that we cannot blot out. Of course, a long-continued, closely-calculating occupation, revolting to every feeling of humanity—but as I said, I will put no obstacle in Herr Sonnenkamp's way, only it is in-

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comprehensible to me that he should seek to be ennobled, and in that way voluntarily challenge inquiry into his antecedents. If, as my friend Wolfsgarten says, you have great influence over Herr Sonnenkamp, advise him to give this thing up."

Eric held his hand before his eyes; his eye was burning, he strove to speak, but could not.

Weidmann, who misapprehended this emotion, said in a mild tone: —

"I admire your power, in having been able, as Herr Knopf informed me, and as I myself see, to bring an atmosphere of noble feeling into this family, to hold your pupil in the path of innocence, and to naturalize him in all that is good. If this boy should one day learn ——"

"Learn what? what? I beg of you," Eric was at last able to utter.

"Do you mean to say," answered Weidmann, pressing his head with both hands, "do you mean to say that you know nothing about it?"

"I know nothing more than this, that Herr Sonnenkamp owned large plantations with great numbers of slaves, that he grew tired of the life, and therefore came back to Germany."

"Herr Sonnenkamp — Herr Sonnenkamp!" said Weidmann, "a pretty name! and it is well for him that his mother bore it. So you have never heard of a Herr Banfield?"

"Nothing very definite; but the head gardener told me that Herr Sonnenkamp was very angry on his return from the Baths, when he found that name registered in the visitors' book. But tell me, what is there in that?"

"Herr Sonnenkamp, or rather, not Herr Sonnenkamp, but, as his name really is, Herr Banfield, is in so many words the most notorious slave-dealer ever known in the Southern States; nay, more. My nephew, Doctor Fritz, could tell you many a thing he has done; he even went so far as to defend slavery in the public prints, and he was so shameless as to set himself up as a proof that all Germans had not degenerated into sentimental humanity, but that he, a representative of Germany, supported slavery, maintaining it to be right. He has a ring on his thumb; if he takes the ring off, you can see the marks of the teeth of a slave whom he was throttling, and who bit him in that thumb."

A cry of horror was wrung from Eric's heart; he could only gasp out the words: —

"O Roland! O Mother! O Manna!"

"It grieves me to tell you this, but it is best that you should learn it through me. You cannot conceive that a man with such antecedents can at times appear so well, and engage in the discussions of principles. Yes, this man is a swamp encircled with flowers. The fellow has cost me many days of my life, for I cannot understand how he can live. Slave-dealing is murder in cold blood, the annihilation of free existence for one's own gain; the murderer from passion, and the murderer from rapacity, stalk over the corpses of their victims to gratify their desire of establishing their supposed rights. The world is to them a field of battle and a conflict, an annihilation of their foes, to find room for themselves. But a slave-dealer — a slave murderer! And this man is now a fruit-grower, a most excellent, careful fruit-grower, in mockery of the words: 'By their fruits ye shall know them.' Oh! my head was fairly crazed with this man, until I brought myself to the point of being able to forget him!"

Weidmann spoke on uninterruptedly, as if he did not wish these sad thoughts to settle down upon him.

Soon Eric raised his head and besought him: —

"Tell me all."

"Yes, you shall know all,— ah, what is all? You have heard of the fate of Captain Brown at Harper's Ferry?"

"Certainly. Was Herr Sonnenkamp there too?"

"He was a ringleader."

Eric related how Roland at one time in his fever dreams shouted, "John Brown is hanging on the gallows!"

The more he spoke of Roland, the more feelingly his voice trembled, and at last hot tears burst from his eyes. He apologized for this weakness before Weidmann, who said: —

"Your tears consecrate you in my eyes forever; you shall find in me a friend whom you may call upon at any time and in any situation of life. Whatever is in my power is yours, your deeds shall be mine. You are not weak, you are strong, you must be; and it is a noble vocation for you to be placed as you are at the side of such a youth, with such a fatal inheritance."

Eric stood up and drew a long deep breath; the two men held fast each other's hands, and laying his left on his heart, Eric said: —

"I hope that I shall show myself worthy of your appeal."

"I knew this, and it is better, as I said, that you have learned the thing from me. There's no doubt about the matter, depend upon it."

For a long while not a word was spoken.

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Eric had called out Manna's name with Roland's and his mother's. Now, for the first time, in the deepest sorrow, it broke upon him fully, that he loved Manna; and with a sense of satisfaction the thought shot through his soul that he had not yet spoken to her a word of love.

Terrified at this selfishness he started up.

How could he think of himself, and not of her hard fate? He grieved for her, above all, that she should be the daughter of such a man.

How will she bear it? And did she know it perhaps already? Was this the cause of her secluded life, of the eagerness to sacrifice herself and take the veil?

"Don't lose yourself in thoughts and anxious speculations," said Weidmann admonishingly.

Eric did not dare to speak of Manna; he merely asked Weidmann whether he thought he ought to communicate this information to his mother; for it was doubly agonizing to have involved his mother in such a connection.

Weidmann said that he well knew what a frightful thing it must be to eat this man's bread, to drink his wine, to receive services at his hand. But he impressed upon Eric the necessity of sparing his mother the recital as long as possible, since he needed her sorely as a stay for Frau Ceres and Manna. Yes, Weidmann called it a rare piece of good fortune to have at one's side, aiding and supporting, a woman so noble, and so tried in the battle of life.

It was long after midnight when Eric left his host.

He went to his room; he saw that Roland was asleep, and a silent vow rose to his lips, as he gazed upon the handsome, sleeping boy.

Eric wandered restless through the house and through the woods; meteors darted hither and thither through the sky; in the distance glistened the waves of the Rhine; a dewy atmosphere lay upon the whole earth; Eric found no rest, nay, he found hardly a moment's meditation. What should he, what could he do?

Morning began to glimmer; he returned to the courtyard.

Here everything was full of life.

He first fell in with Knopf, who said to him: —

"I haven't slept a wink the whole night on your account. Ah, that question of yours! Theoretically it cannot be solved, since all the real relations of life are made up not of whole numbers, but of fractions only, and can only be expressed in fractions. So the total also cannot be expressed in one whole number. I can't make out, and it turns my head to think of what I should do if I were possessed of many millions. To found benevolent institutions, that is hardly enough; the whole world shouldn't be a vast almshouse, a piously endowed establishment. I would have joy and beauty everywhere; men should be not only fed and clothed, they should also be happy. In the first place, I would found in every town a good salary for the teacher who leads the singing-club, and a pint of wine for every member on Sunday; and I would build a concert-hall in every town, with lofty summer-saloons, and well-heated rooms in winter, ornamented with beautiful paintings; and in them should be hung up the prizes gained by the club.

"I would also erect an institute for poor children, and make myself director of it; and then I would found a refuge for deserving tutors. I have even fixed on the name it should go by, — "The Home for Eventide." Oh, that will be magnificent; how the old teachers will wrangle and each extol his system as the best! I have also decided to let the principal lie, and take a million from it to go travelling with. I would take with me a dozen or more companions, honest, capable men, naturalists, painters, sculptors, merchants, politicians, teachers — in a word, capable men from all callings. I would have them equipped with everything needful, and we would stop wherever and as long as we chose. In this way I would learn what are the best social arrangements in the world, and when I came home I'd establish similar ones. I do not expect to find it out all at once. Only think what a fine thing such a journey would be, with a dozen or more right clever men, with our own ship for the sea, and with mules for the mountains. In a word, it would be splendid, and useful at the same time. And when Roland comes home he must turn agriculturist; it is altogether the best life; that is to say, man has in that life the best basis to stand upon — the most natural basis. But, as I said, I am counting my chickens before they are hatched."

Eric hardly heard what Knopf was saying, and for the first time woke up out of his dreams when Knopf asked him, —

"Where is Roland? I promised to wake him in time for the departure of Doctor Fritz and his child."

"Just let him sleep."

"On your responsibility?"

"On my responsibility."

"Very well," rejoined Knopf. "Indeed, I had rather not wake him. In that way Roland will have to suffer a pretty little bit

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of romantic pain. I cannot tolerate this sentimental nonsense between children. Now he has taken his leave, or rather not taken his leave in the night, and while he was sleeping she disappeared; that is a bit of romantic pain. This taking leave! In the morning, shivering and shaking on the steamer-landing, or at the railroad station, you take leave; then the ship or the train moves off, then you stand there like one who has been robbed, and then you have got to go back. Ah, it is so absurd! I shiver a whole day after a farewell. But now if Roland wakes up and the child has flown away, that may leave a sweet, strong, ecstatic remembrance behind in the soul; and we too, you, Doctor, and I, are both giants in this children's story."

At this point Herr and Frau Weidmann came upon the scene, as well as their sons, the Russian, the Banker, and all the inmates of the house. All shook hands once more with Doctor Fritz and his child, and Lilian cried, —

"Herr Knopf, give my compliments to Roland, the sleeper."

Away rolled the carriage, the inmates of the house retired to bed; all but Eric and Knopf, who still roamed about in the morning twilight; and Knopf was especially happy to watch so closely once more the universal awakening of nature.

He said that one always neglected it, unless compelled to observe it; and that there were doubtless many poets who sang of the dewy twilight of the morn, who were at the same time frightfully late sleepers.

Eric listened to the good Knopf, but could not conceive how there could be a man out there in the open air alive to such contemplation; with him every thought and every act, the very idea that there was still much to do in life, seemed like a shadowy dream.

On the other hand, Knopf thought that Eric was all attention, and expressed regret that the child had gone; he still had the Russian Prince to instruct, indeed, but the child had made the whole house happy; she was like a living, speaking rose transplanted from the New World. They were evidently expressions which were to serve as ornaments to a poem already begun or in contemplation.

Eric listened to it all patiently.

At last he asked Knopf if Doctor Fritz had said much to him about Herr Sonnenkamp.

Knopf confirmed a part of Weidmann's information; but he did not seem to know everything.

"I take the holy morn to witness," exclaimed Knopf, "you are a man to be honored, Herr Dournay. If I had known at the time the antecedents of Herr Sonnenkamp, I should not have felt so secure when I was teaching Roland. I should always have felt as if there was a loaded pistol at my ear, to go off at any moment. Yes, you are a strong man; this is a new kind of greatness, for I know what it means to control and manage Roland as you do."

Knopf had seized hold of Eric's hand, and in his excessive enthusiasm he kissed it.

Eric was calm, and Knopf had a beatific look; his countenance with its smiles was like the stream, on whose bosom the wind tosses along the rippling waves. He maintained that they were both happy in being co-workers in the solution of the most difficult and most sublime problem of the century; for Eric had Roland to instruct, who would be obliged to have relations with slavery, and he himself had the Russian for a pupil, who had now the emancipated serfs to manage.

He represented that the prince wanted him to go home with him, and establish a school for the liberated serfs; Doctor Fritz, on the other hand, wanted him to go to America and manage a school for the children of freed negroes. He reproached himself with not having really a stronger inclination for the negro children, for as he wished to be honest, he must confess he would only go to America for the sake of seeing Lilian once more, and observing how she developed, and what fortune was in store for her.

As Eric was returning to the courtyard, he saw Weidmann and the Banker getting into the carriage; they were going to the capital to negotiate for the domain. Eric bade good-bye to them, and expressed his determination to return at once to Villa Eden. As he named Villa Eden, he felt a shiver creep over him. Weidmann stepped out of the carriage once more, took Eric aside, impressed upon him the necessity of being circumspect, and from the carriage exclaimed, —

"Dear Dournay, both for your mother and your aunt, my house is always yours."

Eric went away to waken Roland. As he woke up, he cried, —

"Is it morning already? Are they still here?"

"Who?"

"Lilian and her father."

"No; they have been gone this long while."

"And why didn't you wake me up?"

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"Because you needed sleep. In one hour we are going home again."

Roland turned defiantly away; but while Eric was talking to him with great earnestness, he turned his face towards him at last, and on his long eyelashes stood big tears.

"What tears will those eyes one day shed?" said Eric to himself.

The carriage in which Doctor Fritz and his child had left came back. The coachman brought still another greeting from Lilian to Roland. The horses were not taken out, but fed in harness, and soon Eric and Roland were journeying homewards.

CHAPTER VI.

THE WORLD A MASQUERADE.

If romantic affliction manifests itself in a pale face, a feeling of loathing, obstinacy, and hatred of one's neighbor and of everything, then had Roland experienced a genuine romantic affliction. He sat near Eric in the carriage, and shut his eyes so as to see nothing but what was going on in his own imagination; he pressed his lips hard together, pale and trembling, determined not to say a word.

Am I a child still, he asked himself, that can be knocked about hither and thither, that must obey and ask for no reason? Why didn't Eric give a reason for his returning so suddenly? Why did Knopf, with a triumphant smile, tell me that he didn't wake me on purpose? Then it flashed upon him that Knopf had taken upon himself the responsibility that Eric had assumed, and he might have thought that it would be better for Roland to be angry with an absent one, than with him in whose hands he had to remain. In the meanwhile Roland glanced over towards Eric, to see whether he wasn't on the point of beginning to explain everything to him; but Eric was silent; he had also shut his eyes.

In the bright day, through a landscape full of life, they both rode on wrapt in their own reveries.

Overcome with fatigue, Eric sat as if sunk in a half sleep, in which the rattle of the carriage sounded like a demoniacal rumble. At times, when they were descending, and the locked wheels squeaked and grated, he would look up, catch a glimpse of the Rhine in the distance, then shut his eyes, and in his half dream pierce through the view of water of mountain; and it seemed to him, as if everything was flooded over, and in the midst of the waves stood two men on rocks, far from, and still beckoning to, each other. On one stood Clodwig, speaking of a Roman relic which he held in his hand, and on the other stood Weidmann, talking of life insurance, and between whiles they were talking about Eric and Roland. And just as he woke up he heard quite distinctly, as if both had shouted out to each other, "Eric and Roland have reached home safely!"

"Here there are," they had shouted; "here they are," shouted a voice from without.

The horses stopped; Fräulein Milch was standing at the garden hedge; they were at the Major's. Eric greeted her, and taking it for granted that they had not come to see her, Fräulein Milch called out: —

"The Major drove over to the Villa more than an hour ago, and left word with me, that he would not be back to dinner."

Eric got out; he asked Fräulein Milch about his mother, and whether she knew what was going on at the villa. He learned that there must be something unusual, for everything was in happy confusion; to-day, undoubtedly, the betrothal of Von Pranken and Manna would be solemnized.

Eric allowed Roland to go home alone; he had to shape his course anew.

"The whole world is a masquerade," said Fräulein Milch.

Eric, who honored the good old lady sincerely, did not, however, feel in the mood for discussing generalities about mankind; and when Fräulein Milch tried to get out of him what he had learned at Mattenheim, he approached the limit of impoliteness in answer to her repeated inquiries. He did not suspect that Fräulein Milch, who knew everything already, wished to come to an explanation with him.

He had desired to compose himself here as in a sort of ante-room, and to think matters over, and now he went away as if frightened. He saw the handsome villa glistening in the bright sunshine, the blazing panes of the glass house and cupola; he saw the park, he saw the green cottage in which his mother lived — and all this was built and planted from the profits of traffic in human beings.

Does Pranken know it? He must know it, and then it remains to be seen whether he will extend his hand to the daughter of this house. Hatred and bitterness that Manna should belong to this house penetrated his whole being, made his hair stand on end, and clenched his fists; he would dash the whole lying structure to pieces. But Manna — how would she take it? He stood still, upbraiding himself that he had ever thought himself capable of cherishing one noble thought within his soul. He stood

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still and stared at the rocks as if he would have dashed them down into the valley, crushing everything beneath. A physical pain, a pang through his heart, almost took away his breath. Beaming out from the surrounding darkness it stood before him — he loved Manna; and without being aware of it, he laughed aloud.

"The daughter of this man thy wife, the mother of thy children? The world is a masquerade."

The words of Fräulein Milch came back to him, and he added to them, —

"And I am not called to tear off the mask from the faces of the maskers?"

Inwardly composed he went to the villa.

CHAPTER VII.

A MILLION OF POUNDS IN HAND, AND A UNIFORM TO BACK IT.

When Roland came to the Villa, he was at once summoned to his father; and as he approached him, Sonnenkamp exclaimed: —

"My son! my son! it is thou indeed! everything for thee; thou art forever secure, and elevated forever. My beloved son! Everything for thee!"

The strong man now raised up the youth like a child, and exclaimed: — "Roland, it is accomplished; forget not this moment, the crowning moment of my whole life, crowded as it has been with dangers and wanderings. My son, from this day forth, you are to be called Roland von Lichtenburg."

Roland stood once more on the floor, and trembled as he cast an involuntary glance into the large mirror.

"Yes," laughed the father, "look at yourself; so does the young baron appear. Ah! my child, you will know after a while what has been done for you. But let it remain concealed between ourselves how we have been affected by this, for I cannot show the world, and you must not, that I laid so much stress on the matter. I shall appear indifferent; we must both appear so. Above all, do not let Herr Dournay know anything of it. You came quick to-day; where did you meet my messenger?"

Roland said that he knew nothing of any messenger. He now heard that his father, in the night, had sent a messenger to Mattenheim, with word to come back at once; and also that the son of the Cabinetsrath, the ensign, had been on a visit to the house with many companions, who were again coming at noon to see Roland.

"And where is Herr Dournay?" again asked Sonnenkamp.

Roland replied that he had remained behind with Fräulein Milch. Sonnenkamp laughed, and impressed his son with the necessity of continuing his customary deportment towards Eric; he must always be grateful to him, and he should be especially careful to be right modest.

"You must also learn to treat our elevation of rank as unimportant before the world. Now go to your mother — no, wait. You must still have something more that will make you strong, that will make you proud, that will make you feel safe. Stand here, I will show you how highly I esteem you, how I look upon you as a grown man."

He fumbled hurriedly in his pocket finally he brought out the ring of keys, went to the fire-proof safe built in the wall, rattled back the knobs on it, and at once opened both the folding-doors.

"See here," said he, "all this will, one day, be yours, yours and your sister's. Come here, hold out your hands — so." He took a large package out of the safe, and said: —

"Attend to what I say; here I put a million pounds sterling — so — hold tight. Do you know what that is, a million pounds? more than six millions of thalers are contained in these papers, and, beside that, I have something to spare. Does your head whirl? it must not; you must know what you possess, what will make you master of the world, superior to everything. Now give it to me. See, here it lies in this place; close by it are the other papers; underneath them is gold, coined gold; a good deal of it; I like coined gold; uncoined, too; that lies here. I may die. I often feel that a vertigo might suddenly seize me, and carry me off. Over here, see here — here lies my will. When I die, you are of age. Now, my full-grown son, you are a man, give me your hand. How does the hand feel that held in it millions of your own? That gives strength, does it not? Be not faint-hearted; I trust you, you and I alone know it. Now go, my son, be proud within yourself and modest before the world; you are more, you have more, than all the nobility of this land, more perhaps than the Prince himself. There, my child, there! this moment makes me happy — very happy. If I die, you know already — you know all now. There, go now. Come and let me kiss you once. Now go."

Roland could not utter a word; he went, he stood outside the door, he stared at his hands, — these hands had held millions of his own; everything that he had ever thought and heard of the joy and woe of riches, everything was in utter confusion in his mind; inwardly, however, he experienced a sensation of joy, of proud enthusiasm, that had

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almost made him shout aloud. If he had only been permitted to tell it all to Eric! He felt as if he could not keep it to himself; but then he was not allowed to communicate it to any one. His father had put his trust in him; he dared not betray the trust.

He went to his mother. Frau Ceres, handsomely dressed, was walking up and down in the great hall; she gave Roland a haughty nod, and gazed at him a long while without saying a word; at length she said:—

"How am I to be saluted simply with 'Good-morning, mamma?' It ought to be, 'Good-morning, Frau mamma, good-morning, Frau Baroness. You are very gracious, Frau Baroness — I commend myself to your grace, Frau Baroness — you look extremely well, Frau Baroness.' Ha, ha, ha!"

Roland felt a painful shudder thrill through him; it seemed to him as if his mother had suddenly become insane. But in a moment she was standing before a mirror, and saying:—

"Your father is right — quite right; we have all been born to-day for the first time, we have come into the world anew, and we are all noble. Now come, kiss your mother, your gracious mother."

She kissed Roland passionately, and then said, that if she could only have all the malicious tale-bearers there, they would be smothered with envy at beholding the good fortune that had befallen her.

"But where is Manna?" asked Roland.

"She is silly, she has been spoiled in the convent, and will not hear a word about anything; she has shut herself up in her room, and will not let any one see her. Go try if she will not speak to you, and get her to smile. The Professorin has always told me that I was sensible; yes, now I will be sensible; I will show that I am. The big Frau von Endlich, and the Countess Wolfsgarten, proud as a peacock — we are noble too, now — will burst with indignation. Go, dear child, go to your sister, bring her here; we will rejoice together, and dress up finely, and to-morrow you shall go with your father and Herr von Pranken to the capital."

Roland went to Manna's room, he knocked and called; she answered finally that she would see him in an hour's time, but now she must be left alone.

As Roland was going to his own room, Pranken met him; he embraced him warmly, called him brother, and accompanied him with congratulations to his room. Here lay the uniform, which had been ordered for Roland. Pranken urged him to put it on at once; but Roland did not want to, before he had passed his examination.

"Pah!" laughed Pranken, "examination! that is a scare-crow for poor devils of commoners. My young friend, you are now a Baron, and by that means you have passed the best part of the examination: what is now to come is only form."

It required no great persuasion to induce Roland to put on the uniform. Pranken helped him. The uniform became him admirably; he looked both lithe and strong; he had broad shoulders, and the pliancy of his form did not disguise his manly strength of muscle.

"Really, I had rather have gone into the navy," said he, "but there doesn't happen to be any."

Once more, accompanied by Pranken, he went to Manna's room, and cried out, that she ought to see him in his uniform, but Manna returned no answer whatever.

Pranken now went with Roland to his father, and both conducted him to his mother; she was ravished at his appearance. Roland did not know what to do with himself from excitement; he went into the park, he saluted the trees; he showed his uniform to the sky and to the plants; but his salutations met with no response. He showed himself to the servants, and they all congratulated him. While he was standing, his left hand upon his sword, near the porter, who was saluting him in military fashion like a veteran, Eric came up. He did not recognize Roland at first, and seemed to wake up only when his pupil began to speak. Roland's cheek was glowing with excitement, and he exclaimed in a loud voice:—

"Ah, if I were only able to tell you all, Eric! I feel as if I were intoxicated, and metamorphosed. Tell me, am I awake or dreaming? Ah, Eric, I can't say anything more now."

Roland went with Eric to his room, and questioned him eagerly whether he had not also been as happy the first time he had put on his uniform.

Eric could not give him an answer; he tried to remember how he felt the first time he had donned his uniform, but he recollected much better how he felt the last time he had doffed it. A remembrance did come to him, however, a long forgotten remembrance. The Doctor had once said that Roland never took any pleasure in a new suit, but now he was in raptures over the gay-colored soldier's coat; all ideals seemed to have disappeared, or at least to have concentrated in this coat. Eric gazed at him sadly; he came near saying that the two most beautiful moments in the soldier's life were, when he put on the uniform, and

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when he took it off forever. But he could not now make this reply, for there are things which every one must experience for himself, and cannot learn from others; and what would anything amount to on this present occasion?

Joseph came and said that Eric must repair to Herr Sonnenkamp.

With the ground reeling under him, with everything swimming before his eyes, like one in a dream, Eric went across the court and up the steps; he stood in the antechamber. Now is the decisive moment.

CHAPTER VIII.

RESERVATIONS.

Eric entered; he did not venture to look at Sonnenkamp; he dreaded every word he might have to say to him; for every thought that Sonnenkamp expressed to him, everything which his thoughts had touched on, seemed to him polluted. But now as he fixed his gaze upon him, Sonnenkamp seemed to be transformed, as if he had by some charm contracted his powerful frame. He looked so modest, so humble, so childlike, smiling there before him. He informed Eric, in a quiet tone, that the Prince had seen fit in his graciousness to invest him with a title of nobility, and was soon to deliver him the patent confirming it with his own hand.

Eric breathed with still greater difficulty, and could not utter a word.

"You are surprised?" asked Sonnenkamp. "I know the Jewish banker has been refused, — and I even think — the gentlemen are very shrewd — I even think — however, it doesn't make any difference; every one works his own way. I know also that a certain Doctor Fritz has been at the philanthropist Weidmann's, and that he has spoken a good deal of slander about a man whom I unfortunately resemble — isn't it so? I see it in your countenance. I hope, however, that you will not — no, be quite at ease, my dear, good friend; rejoice with me and for our Roland."

Eric looked up now freely. There is certainly some mistake here, for the man could not be so composed, if he had anything to dread.

Sonnenkamp continued:—

"You will remain our friends, you and your noble mother."

He held out his hand; now again Eric shuddered all over. The ring on his thumb — is that too a mystery, a deception? Sonnenkamp could not but feel that there was something wrong; he suddenly drew back the outstretched hand, as if a wild beast had extended its claw towards it, but said with great composure:—

"I know you are an opposer of election to the nobility."

"No; more than that, I wanted to say something," interposed Eric; but Sonnenkamp interrupted him hastily.

"Excuse me if I do not wish to hear any more."

Suddenly shifting the conversation, he continued in an earnest tone, saying that Eric had now only the finishing stroke to put to his work, by guiding and fortifying Roland into a true appreciation of his new position and his new name.

"It would be a fine thing if you should take the Professorship; I would then let Roland, until we ourselves moved into town, and perhaps even then, occupy the same residence with you; you would remain his friend and instructor, and everything would go on excellently."

With great frankness, he added, that he desired, since he, as a father, was not in the position to see to it himself, that Roland should be wisely and discreetly led to a personal knowledge of that thing which men call vice; this alone would preserve him from excess.

Eric remained silent; he had come with warnings, and full of anxiety; now the whole affair was ended, now nothing remained to be done; yes, through Sonnenkamp's own acknowledgment that he was mistaken for Herr Banfield, every objection seemed to be put at rest. For the sake of saying something, Eric asked where the Major was. With great satisfaction, Sonnenkamp replied that the building of the castle had fortunately so far progressed, that they would be able on their return from the capital to open it; the Major had just gone to the castle to make the necessary arrangements.

"Have you seen your mother yet?"

"No."

"She has, I am sorry to say, sent word to me that she is a little unwell, and will not be able to partake in our rejoicing."

Eric hastened to his mother. He had never yet seen her ill; now she lay exhausted on the sofa, and was delighted at his returning so immediately upon the reception of her letter. Eric knew nothing of any letter, and heard now, also for the first time, that Sonnenkamp had sent a messenger, to whom his mother had also given a letter.

His mother, who was feverish, said that she felt as if a severe sickness was threatening her; it seemed to her as if the house in which she was, was floating on the waves

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nearer and nearer to the sea; she had to force herself to keep awake, for as soon as she closed her eyes, this sensation returned to her more frightful than ever. She sat up and said: —

"Now you have come back, everything will be well once more. I felt timid alone here in this perverse world."

Eric felt that it was impossible to tell his mother anything of what he had learned at Weidmann's.

His mother complained: —

"Ah, I wish it may not be with you as it is with me; the older I become, the more mysterious and complicated are many things to me. You men are fortunate; individual things do not vex you so much, because you can see a united whole."

As the mother gazed confusedly about her she looked upon her son, and her eye sank; she would willingly have imparted her trouble to him; but why burden him when he could do no good? She kept it to herself.

Eric told her of the interesting life he had seen at Mattenheim, and how fortunate he had been in gaining there a fatherly friend. In the way in which he described the energetic activity of the family, it seemed as if he were bringing a fresh breeze into the room; and the mother said: —

"Yes, we forget in our troubles that there are still beautiful, harmonious existences in the world for a maiden like Manna." And just as she mentioned her name, a messenger from Manna came with the request, that the Professorin would come to her.

Eric wanted to say to the messenger in reply, that his mother was unwell, and to ask Fräulein Manna therefore to have the goodness to come to her; but his mother sat erect, and said: —

"No, she requires my assistance; I must be well, and I am well. It is best that my duty saves me from yielding to this weakness."

She got up quickly, and said to the messenger: —

"I will come."

She dressed hurriedly, and went with her son to the villa.

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CHAPTER IX.

HERO ROLAND'S MOTTO.

THE Professor's wife announced herself at Manna's door; Manna opened it. With a bloodless countenance, she stood before the Mother and languidly held out her hand.

"I have wrestled with myself all alone," she said; "I cannot find the outlet; I must tell you all."

And now Manna related how she had grown up in most reverent respect for her father, and how she had often painfully lamented that her mother was so harsh and cold to him; but once — she had never learned what had transpired previously — her mother had said in the presence of her father: —

"'Know then who your father is, who your father is.' Don't look at me, I beg of you; I beg you, let me speak it softly in your ear."

She whispered the words softly in the ear of the Professorin. The latter sat there and held her hands in her lap, and shut her eyes; not a sound was heard in the room: it seemed as if the whole world was dead, and the two human beings that sat there opposite to each other, dead as well. Manna went on to say that she did not at first understand what this meant, but gradually it had come to her, and she had persuaded her parents to let her go to the convent. On the way thither the thought was continually present to her, how, in old times, Iphigenia had offered herself up as a propitiatory sacrifice, and so she longed to offer herself up a willing and a hopeful victim, to wash away all the guilt of those who were dear to her.

"I felt then as if something had been cleft within me, as if a vein had burst in my heart. I looked upon myself as a victim on the altar. I had the courage then, I wanted to act decisively before that courage deserted me, for I was afraid of my own cowardice, and for that reason was anxious to bind myself at once."

Again, after a longer pause — the Professorin did not interrupt with a single word — Manna said that she did not understand what her father was doing, and she, she herself must be made noble, and become Pranken's bride, of equal rank with him. She had honored and esteemed Pranken; he was a man of the world, but of a profoundly generous and religious character.

Sobbing bitterly, she threw herself upon the mother's neck, and exclaimed: —

"I cannot! I cannot be his wife. Ah! I am too weak. You have told me that I should have to experience trying conflicts, but I had never thought, never dreamt of such a thing as this. No; no, indeed."

"What more?" asked the Mother.

Manna hid her face in her hands, then threw herself upon the Mother's neck and wept.

The Mother entreated her to let her know the rest, but Manna remained silent; finally she uttered the words: —

"No, I shall take it with me into the grave; it is mine alone."

The Professorin spoke words of hope and comfort to her, and asked her whether she had ever mentioned in confession what she now confessed to her. Manna said no, and then threw herself upon her knees before the Mother, and besought her to tell no one what she had related of her father. But she started up suddenly as if bitten by a serpent, when the Professorin told her that she had known it all a long while, that it had been a heavy burden to her, but that it was the duty of the innocent not to withdraw themselves from one who seeks to efface a wretched past.

A strange agitation swept over Manna's countenance.

"Who else knows it? Tell me."

"Why should I, my child? Why do you so torment your soul, and make it wander from house to house, from man to man, crushed, begging, and imploring forgiveness?"

"My prayer, my sacrifice is rejected; I am cast out, we are all cast out. No, I am free; the holy ones in heaven have not been willing to accept my sacrifice. It shall live within my own bosom only, within myself, within my crushed and shattered heart. I am free — free."

"Your laugh makes me feel uneasy," said the Professorin, who was observing closely the play of Manna's features. Manna moaned that her sorrow was sevenfold.

"Ah!" she exclaimed, "I have spoken with my brother only once about slavery, and then I felt as if something was whirling around me, when he said, Beings who are admitted to religious life are our equals. He is right; whoever enters the sanctuary of the knowledge of God is a free child of God; and I shuddered when I thought for the first time how it could be possible for a man to be praying in church, and have near by, separated from him only by a railing, men who were slaves. Is not his every word of prayer, is not his offering, a lie? It was a frightful pathway upon which I had entered, and all the powers of evil were pushing me on further and further. How is it then? how can a priest receive the

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child of a man, how could he receive us into the church, while our father still ——"

As if a weight lay on her heart, Manna placed her hand there, and seemed unable to go on.

The Professorin consoled her.

"My child," she said, "do not lay the blame on Religion; cast no stone at those who cannot accomplish everything, who cannot equalize all the inequalities that have come into the world from sin. The temple is great, pure, and sublime, even though cares, sloth, and base submission have found hiding-places in it."

From the bottom of her heart, the Professorin sought to keep Manna from losing her hold upon religion; she spoke with enthusiasm of those who devote their whole existence to the Most High, who restlessly work and strive, without reward, to fashion the earth into a dwelling-place of love and virtue.

Manna looked up astonished at the woman who thus counselled her; her lips parted, but she could not utter the words that lay upon her tongue; she wanted to ask. "But are you not a Huguenot?" But she kept back the words, for it seemed to her at this moment as if every difference in form of religious belief had been blotted out; here was indeed nothing but a heart simple in its purpose, gentle, patient, suffering, and devoted to good. Now she felt that she had fully and entirely devoted herself to the noble woman; she flung herself into her arms; with tears in her eyes she kissed the Mother's cheeks, forehead, and hands, and asked her to lay her hands upon her head, and save her from dying of grief.

Silent and locked in each other's arms sat the two women, when a knock was heard at the door.

Sonnenkamp called out that he must speak with his daughter.

"You must speak to him," said the Professorin.

Manna rose, and pushed back the bolts of the door.

Sonnenkamp entered.

"I am glad you are well again," said he in a clear voice to the Professor's wife.

He did not dream with what eyes the Professorin and his child regarded him.

"I thank you," he continued, making a gesture which was intended to signify that he desired to be alone with Manna.

Manna perceived it, and she begged — she could not express her agony, but she begged earnestly — that her father would permit the Professorin to be present at the conversation; she had no secrets from the noble woman.

Sonnenkamp shrugged his shoulders.

Was it possible? No, it could not be, his own child could not have betrayed him.

He now said plainly that he would rather speak with Manna alone.

The Professorin rose to go, and Sonnenkamp begged her in a kindly tone to keep his wife company during his absence, and give her all the instruction and advice necessary to enable her to enter upon her new sphere of life with becoming repose and dignity.

The Professorin bowed and left them.

Manna had to sit down; she felt as if her limbs would never again support her; Sonnenkamp said to her that she had doubtless long ago forgotten the bitter epithet that her mother had applied to him; she might now go to her mother, who would assure her, that she had only made use of the words in anger.

Manna nodded, without saying a word; and then Sonnenkamp spoke of her marriage with Pranken, in regard to which he took a pride in feeling that he had never laid any constraint upon his child. Manna implored him not to press the matter upon her then.

"Very well, you need not make up your mind till our return, but promise me to be friendly to him."

Manna could promise this, and Sonnenkamp smiled inwardly at the thought of his keeping Pranken in suspense until everything was finally arranged; if any insurmountable difficulty came up then, it could not change what would be already settled.

"You are now a Freifräulein," said he impressively and smiling to his child, "you shall be free in everything; only, to-day, let everything remain still in suspense. I cannot be dishonorable." He really meant, that he did not so much mind deceiving Pranken, but he added that it would be much more proper to consent or to refuse when they had been for a short time, in the full possession of their new rank. And with that, he took leave of his child with friendly words.

At noon there was great rejoicing at the villa, for the Ensign with a number of his comrades had arrived; they rode out with Roland, who was treated as one of themselves.

In accordance with Pranken's wish, they started that evening for the capital.

When Roland took leave of Eric's mother, she gave him a paper on which was written, —

On the rim of the Hero Roland's helmet was once and is again inscribed, in golden letters, — "The weapons of the whole world must leave me still unstained."

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CHAPTER X.

DOWN BELOW.

At the servants' table in the basement there was a big gap; the seat at the head, which belonged to Bertram, was not occupied by any one; Joseph and Lootz were also wanting, for they had gone with the old and the young master to the capital. The men and women at the table were whispering in a low tone; at last the head gardener said that the affair was no longer a secret; he maintained that, at the time of the Prince's visit, he had perceived the thing clearly. With a look of modest condescension, that plainly signified his regret at being obliged to exhibit his shrewdness before these people, he let out his words as if such folks could not appreciate what he had to say; Joseph alone, if he had been there, could have bestowed upon him suitable praise. The remaining servants, however, had an ill will against the self-asserting and pretentious head gardener. No one answered him. The big cook, who sat down to table very seldom, for she maintained that she ate hardly anything at all, now ventured to take Bertram's place, so that she could get up at any moment. She said that she had served with the nobility her whole life, and now it was going to be so again. Now the thing was out; and all felt as if a load had been taken off their hearts, since they were at liberty to speak of the matter. The second coachman turned up the skirts of his long waistcoat a little, and contemplated them with a searching look.

"Now then, buttons with coats-of-arms are coming," he said at last; "and our carriage will be new varnished, and a crest will be put on the coach-door; no more of the bare, solitary 'S'. Let Herr von Endlich's coachman say again that the S looks like an interrogation point, for no one really knows who Herr Sonnenkamp is."

One of the grooms was glad that on the horse-blankets a five-pointed coronet would stare everybody in the face.

The laundress complained of the great trouble it would be to mark all the linen anew, and the maid who took care of the silver was glad that she was going to have new spoons and forks, for everything would have to be melted over again and engraved anew.

"And the collars of the hounds will be renewed," exclaimed a hoarse voice.

Everybody laughed at the boy, who had charge of the dogs, who was grinning slyly at the idea of his having said something funny.

The old kitchen maid, who persisted in sitting on her stool and holding her plate in her lap, called over to the second cook:—

"We shall soon have a Frau Lootz. The master will now consent to the marriage."

"Has he given you his consent?"

"God be praised, I don't need it any more. But now he will remain here forever, and never go away any more. Now you can all marry."

The second gardener, the so-called Squirrel, declared with unction:—

"I should not have said a word, but if I were such a rich man I would never have had myself ennobled; no, I had rather be the richest commoner all up and down the Rhine, than the newest noble. I wouldn't flatter the nobility so much. If one has money, he is noble enough."

Everybody sneered at the forward fellow, and the head gardener looked at him with a patronizing air, nodding, his features saying at the same time, "I would never have given the simpleton credit for such an idea."

They now began to discuss what sort of livery the master would adopt, and whether he would have a "*von*" before his old name, or whether he would take an entirely new name. Finally the conversation turned upon Pranken's marriage. The fat cook reminded them that when Eric first came to the house, the old kitchen maid had prophesied that Eric would be the son of the house; now the reputation she had as a prophetess was gone, for the marriage was a fixed thing, and they were only delaying the announcement of it till the Fräulein was ennobled. Old Ursel made a wry face, looked about her and winked, pressed her apron against her mouth, and nodded triumphantly; at length she began to make her explanation:—

"I don't believe yet, that she will marry the light, twisted moustache. Remember what I say."

The laundress told the fat cook in confidence, that Joseph, the valet — she had observed it the whole winter through— was making love to the daughter of the landlord of the Victoria.

The conference in the basement lasted a long while; it was not broken up until a voice from overhead fell upon their ear with the message, that the horses would have to be harnessed again, night as it was, for the gracious Frau wished to drive out.

Where? No one knew.

CHAPTER XI.

THE FIRST NIGHT OF A BARONESS.

"Yes, it's all very nice for him, he goes

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off on his pleasure, and leaves me here alone! What am I to do now?"

Thus Frau Ceres was complaining to Fräulein Perini, when Sonnenkamp, Franken, and Roland were gone. With the hurry and restlessness of fever she was walking up and down the room, every now and then asking whether there was nothing to be done, and begging Fräulein Perini to tell her what she ought to do. The latter urged her to be composed, and asked her to sit down by her side, and fill out the ground at the other end of her embroidery.

"Yes," exclaimed Frau Ceres suddenly, "now I have it. I'll do something that will please him too; I'll embroider a sofa-cushion with our coat-of-arms. Besides, I have seen hassocks in the church with coats-of-arms embroidered on them; we'll have those too."

Fräulein Perini nodded.

"And something else yet!" said she.

"Really? Do you know of something else?" exclaimed Frau Ceres.

"Yes, it will be something well befitting your pious mind. You have already thought of it, only you have forgotten about it."

"What? what have I forgotten?"

"You intended, when the title was obtained, to embroider an altar-cloth at once."

"Yes, so we will. Did I ever say so? Ah! I forget everything. Ah, dear madame, stay with me always, advise me in everything. Have you a large frame? Let us begin at once."

Fräulein Perini had everything ready, silk, worsted, gold-thread and silver-thread, frame and patterns. Frau Ceres actually made a few stitches, but then stopped and said: —

"I am trembling to-day; but I have commenced the altar-cloth, and now we will work on at it. You will help me, will you not?"

Fräulein Perini assented; she knew that she would have to do the whole herself, but Frau Ceres had now become somewhat calmer.

"Will you not send for the Priest, or hadn't we better go and visit him ourselves?"

"As you see fit."

"No, we had better be alone. Where is Manna, I wonder? She ought to come, she ought to be with her mother."

She rang and sent for Manna; but received for answer, that she had just gone to rest; she begged her mother to excuse her, she was very tired.

"But where is the Professorin? Oughtn't she to come and congratulate me?"

"She was with Fräulein Manna, and went home again," answered Fräulein Perini.

"She was in the house, and didn't come to see me?" said Frau Ceres, in an angry tone; "she shall come at once — this very moment. Send for her. I am the Mother, to me is honor first due, then to the daughter. Send for her, she must come at once."

Fräulein Perini had to gratify her, but with great caution, she impressed upon Frau Ceres the necessity of being quite composed and dignified in her manner toward the learned court-lady, who must not suppose that people would have to learn from her, at the outset, how to comport themselves in elevated positions.

"You should be rather quiet in your manner, Frau Baroness."

"Frau Baroness! Am I to expect that the Professorin will address me so?"

"Certainly, she is perfectly well bred."

Frau Ceres began once more to walk restlessly up and down the room. Every once in a while, she would stand still before the large mirror, and make a courtesy before some imaginary personage. The courtesy was very successful; she would lay her left hand upon her heart, her right hanging down naturally, and bend very low. On both sides of the mirror four branched candlesticks stood lighted, and once in a while Frau Ceres would put her hand to her brow.

"He has promised me a five-pointed coronet; it will become me, will it not?"

With an exceedingly gracious smile she bowed once more before the mirror.

Fräulein Perini heard outside the arrival of the Professorin; she went to meet her, and begged her to be very forbearing and circumspect with the much agitated Frau Ceres, and not call her anything but Frau Baroness.

"Why did you send me word that she was ill, and call me out in the middle of the night on that account?"

"I beg your pardon; you know that there are sick people who do not go to bed."

The Professorin understood how matters were.

When she entered, Frau Ceres, with her face still turned to the mirror, exclaimed: —

"Ah, that's good! It was gracious in you to come, my dear Professorin, very friendly — very kind. I am a good friend of yours, too."

She then turned round and held out her hand to the new-comer.

The Professorin did not congratulate her, nor did she call her Frau Baroness.

Frau Ceres now wished to know what her husband — but she corrected herself quickly and said: "I should say the Baron

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now; well — what has the Baron to do in town; must he pass a Knight's examination, and will he be knighted before the assembled multitude?"

The Professorin replied that there was nothing of the kind now, there would be simply a parchment patent delivered to him.

"Parchment — parchment?" repeated Frau Ceres several times to herself. "What is parchment?"

"It is dressed skin," said the Professorin in explanation.

"Ah, a scalp — a scalp. I understand. On it — will the patent be written with ink just the same as everything else that they write?"

She stared a long while before her, then after first shutting and again opening her eyes, she begged the Professorin to choose one of her finest dresses for herself; angry and astonished, the Professorin rose, but she sat down again hastily, and said that she was sensible of the kindness of Frau Sonnenkamp, but she no longer wore such fine dresses.

"Frau Sonnenkamp doesn't wear them any more either. Frau Sonnenkamp, Frau Sonnenkamp!" rejoined Frau Ceres.

She wished to remind the Professorin that she had not called her Frau Baroness.

"Have you ever known of the elevation of an American to the ranks of the nobility?" she asked all at once.

The Professorin said no.

When it was now mentioned that Herr Sonnenkamp had received the name of Baron von Lichtenburg from the castle which was rebuilding, Frau Ceres exclaimed: —

"Ah, that's it! that's it! Now I know! This very evening, this very moment, I will visit the castle — our castle! Then I shall sleep sound. You shall both accompany me."

She rang forthwith, and ordered the horses to be harnessed; both the ladies looked at each other, terror-stricken. What would come of it? Who knows but that on the road she might suddenly become distracted and break out into a fit of insanity?

The Professorin had sufficient presence of mind to say to Frau Ceres, that it would be much better to make the visit to the castle the next morning in the daytime; that if they went there in the night, it would make a great talk in the neighborhood.

"Why so? Is there a legend about our castle?"

There was indeed such a legend, but the Professorin took care not to tell it to her just then; she said she was ready to drive for an hour in the mild night, out on the high road with Frau Ceres; she was in hopes that it would quiet her.

And so the three women set out together through the darkness of that pleasant night. The Professorin had so arranged matters that there was not only a servant sitting beside the coachman, but also another on the back seat. She sought to provide against all contingencies. But this precaution was not necessary, for as soon as Frau Ceres was well seated in the carriage, she became very quiet, nay, she began to speak of her childhood.

She was at an early age left an orphan, the daughter of a captain on one of Sonnenkamp's ships, who had made long and very perilous voyages — yes, very perilous, she repeated more than once. After the death of her parents, Herr Sonnenkamp had taken her under his sole guardianship, and had her brought up by herself under the care of an old female servant, and of one man servant.

"He didn't let me learn anything, not anything at all," she complained once more; "he told me, 'It is better for you to remain as you are.' I was not quite fifteen years old when he married me."

She wept; but then, a moment after, clapping her hands like a child, she exclaimed, —

"It's all a story. It was another creature entirely that went through all this, that used to lie in her hammock all day long and dream out there, and now in Europe — but it is just as well, just as well, isn't it?" she said, and reached out her hands affectionately to the Professorin and Fräulein Perini.

"Do you think," she said, turning to the Professorin mysteriously, "do you think that our noble rank is altogether safe and sure?"

"After the decree is issued, everything is secure, but no one can say that anything is certain before it comes to pass; unforeseen obstacles may arise at the very last moment."

"What obstacles? what do you mean? what? what do you know? Tell me all."

The Professorin shuddered inwardly. The restlessness and terror, the wilful, overbearing, and weak nature of Frau Ceres were now for the first time made clear to her; here was a woman who sought to torment her husband by revealing to her child the father's past life.

With entreaties and commands Frau Ceres endeavored to get a statement of the possible obstacles, and she was only quieted by the Professorin assuring her that she

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knew of nothing definite. In spite of the darkness, Fräulein Perini noticed how painfully this untruth fell from the lips of the Professorin; in fact she was just able to let it pass her lips, because she felt herself in the situation of the physician who does not venture to tell his fever-stricken patient the bitter truth.

Frau Ceres lay back in the corner of the carriage; she went to sleep like a child that has cried itself out with temper. Fräulein Perini earnestly begged the Professorin to call Frau Ceres 'Baroness' when she woke up. She told the coachman to turn back; they were on their way home to the Villa.

Frau Ceres was hard to wake; they put her to bed. She thanked the two ladies sincerely, and smiled pleasantly, when the Professorin said at last, —

"I hope you'll sleep well, Frau Baroness."

CHAPTER XII.

AN EMPTY NEST AND A HOME FOR ALL.

TOILING hard, and still singing lustily, the bird has built his nest from odds and ends from every quarter; restless in his task, he has fed his young while starving himself, contenting himself with the growth of the young birds; and now they have all flown away, the nest is empty and forsaken, — torn to shreds.

Such was the reflection in Eric's mind, as he stood in the evening by Roland's bedside, and felt his heart trembling with anxiety for the beloved youth. He wandered out across the country; he felt as if he must go to some friend, to some human being, on whose breast he could lay his weary head.

He would have gone to Clodwig, to the Doctor, to Weidmann, once more; but they could not change the unchangeable, and who knows but that in another hour he would be needed here? he must not leave his mother, he must not leave the house, he must not think of himself.

Thus he roamed about like a wandering spirit through the night. He saw the carriage with the three ladies in it coming along the road; he hid himself quickly behind a hedge; he could not understand what it meant; he had recognized his mother, Frau Ceres, and Fräulein Perini. Where are they hurrying to? Or had he only fancied that he saw them? He watched a long while, then the carriage returned, and he himself went homeward. He sat for some time on a bench in the field-path, opposite the green cottage; he saw the light go out; at last he went to the villa.

At Manna's window, in which there was no light burning, he thought he saw her looking out; he would like to have called out to her; but he did not venture to; he had no right to disturb her in her sad meditation.

It seemed to him as if a white hand was stretched out of the window; he passed hurriedly by.

With mute lips he walked up and down his room; it seemed to him so strange not to be talking with Roland as he had done every evening for so long.

Eric thought that he would seek relief from his own thoughts in some book, but he pushed away the book with the hand he had reached out to take it up. Professor Einsiedel was right, he had cut off his soul from the empire of clear ideas; he cannot easily resume the connection. He had devoted himself to a single human being, and now that he had left him, he was undermined, and without support. And still he said again to himself, If thou hadst not sacrificed thyself for Roland, he would not be so well equipped as he is, and as he will yet prove himself to be, in dangers and temptations. I wonder whether he is thinking of and yearning for me at this moment as I am for him? Not now; now the whirlpool of life is laying hold of him; but moments will come when he will turn towards me, and I will be prepared.

Eric was revolving in his mind what would become of himself now; he could not imagine, but consoled himself with the reflection that each coming day would bring its task with it.

It occurred to him now, for the first time, that he had in his possession some of the property which had been earned in such a way. He was determined not to retain it. Where should he bestow it? To whom could he restore it? He knew not, but there was in his soul a certain fullness of freedom, as he thought, and said aloud to himself, —

"Thou art poor once again, thou hast again nothing but thyself; but thou hast thyself."

What fortunes had he not experienced in these rooms! how his soul, his heart had been swayed to and fro with emotion! and to-morrow, within a few days, is this house to be forsaken, left far behind, a remembrance.

And then?

"Come day, come fate, thou shalt find me ready!'

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Eric felt utterly forsaken and robbed of his all; he longed after a being outside of himself, to clasp him in her arms, and say to him: Thou art at home, thou art at home, thou art with me. He trembled when he thought: How would it be if Bella should see me? And his cheeks began to glow, for he thought to himself thus: No, Manna, thou alone thou shalt never know, 'twill be better for thee and for me. And how? Should I call thee mine, and bear with thee the burden of this horrid wealth? Wealth! Thou wouldst not be in my way; I have pride enough. But no, it shall be put to death before it has time to live; never shall it cross these lips.

He held his hand for some time pressed against his mouth. At last, shutting his eyes, he said half aloud:—

"Good-night, Roland."

When he woke up—and his first thought was, "How is Roland this morning?"—he heard the church-bells ringing. He left the house and would have gone to his mother's, but he dreaded meeting her, for the remembrance of what Weidmann had imparted to him was reviving in his breast, as if he were listening to it now for the first time. He raised his eyes to heaven and said to himself: O sun, what bringest thou new today?

And wonderful! In the midst of all his forlornness, in the midst of all his sorrow, there came upon him suddenly, as if he were standing on the threshold of fortune, something unspeakable, something undiscernible, and, no one could tell whence it was sent.

The bells were still ringing. There is yet something calling upon men, upon every one, and every one may listen to and follow after it, wherefore not also thou? He did not like to be wandering about in aimless dissipation of thought. "The walk in the open air," as Knopf had called it, came into his mind.

He went to the church, and on the way the good Knopf's words haunted him:—"Our life is not simply a walk in the open air."

He entered the church just as the organ pealed out. Knopf is right, he continued to himself; there are the seats, the candlesticks, the kneeling-stools, and they are waiting peacefully and quietly for the comers. Who knows what his neighbor cherishes in his heart? But it is a meeting-place where we find each other and we find ourselves.

Eric sat down quietly behind a pillar.

As he looked up, he saw Manna kneeling not far from the altar.

So will she soon kneel when she is married to Pranken.

Terrified, as if some one had seized him from behind, Eric looked round; there was no one there. He would have left the church, but the quiet hour and the quiet service did him good. What further he thought of, he knew not. The organ sounded, Manna passed him by, he heard the rustle of her dress, he did not stir. The lights on the altar were extinguished, he left the church.

"Ah, you too were in the church?" was the question put to him in a woman's voice.

He looked up astonished; Fräulein Milch stood before him. He greeted her pleasantly, and said he was not aware that she also was a Catholic.

"I am not one, but there are times when I cannot pray alone, I must go into another house, into one that has been erected to the Most High; then must I be with my fellow-creatures, who, like me, seek consolation and peace in the Eternal, even if they do call upon him in another way than mine. I do not pray as the others do, but I pray with them."

She looked confidingly into his countenance, as if she meant to say, "Thou canst not be alone either." As Eric did not make any answer, she asked after his mother, and begged him to say to her, that she had not been to visit her because she was afraid of disturbing her; but that she herself would always be found at home.

"And you, Captain, must come and see us whenever you feel like it. We have not a great deal to offer, but there is one thing that can always be had at our house, and that is quiet. And you need not even bid good-day when you come, but you can make yourself at home with us, whenever you happen to feel the need."

She now asked how Eric felt since Roland had left him, and she was the first to whom Eric expressed his great longing for the youth.

"Roland has become more to me than my dead brother was!" he exclaimed.

And just as he was uttering these words in a somewhat loud and trembling voice, Manna passed by; she had come out of the Priest's house. She greeted both quietly, and pressed her prayer-book tightly to her heart.

"I would be glad to have her a happy nun, but she will not be a happy nun," said Fräulein Milch.

"Naturally," said Eric, jokingly; "she will be Frau von Pranken."

"Frau von Pranken! Never."

"And are you earnest in saying so?"

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"Yes, for Herr von Pranken is going to marry the young widow, the daughter of Herr von Endlich."

"I don't understand this."

"Don't forget, Captain, that I have told you so this day. I know a little something about men. I have never had a word from Baron Pranken except the question, 'Where is the Major?' He never addressed me myself in any way, and I do not take it ill of him, but still, for all that, I know him."

Eric's countenance brightened; he had no reason for putting faith in Fräulein Milch's conjecture, and still he did put faith in it. And now it occurred to him, that he had joyfully anticipated something, he knew not what, to-day; now he had experienced it.

He accompanied Fräulein Milch home. The Major was not in; he had gone to the castle, for there was still a great deal to be done, to be ready for the solemn opening of the castle which was soon to take place.

Eric turned back and went to his mother's.

CHAPTER XIII.

A GRACIOUS HAND POURS OUT THE WINE.

ARE you, too, down-hearted and meditative?" cried the Doctor, meeting him as he was entering the house. "I find here a whole colony of low-spirited people. What is there then in this whole affair so discouraging? Herr Sonnenkamp is getting new clothes and a new equipage made. In old times, I still remember them, a commoner did not dare to drive out in a coach and four, or, if he did, the horses had to be put in hempen traces. Well, Herr Sonnenkamp is getting leather traces made. What of that? Frau Ceres is sick, Manna is sick, the Professorin is sick, the Captain looks sick; Fräulein Perini and your aunt are the only ones in health in the hospital. Effervescing powders must be the prescription for everybody to-day." The Doctor brought with him a cheerful tone, which, like a spicy breeze from the mountain forests, was sweeping away the mists. The Mother could not tell why she was so uneasy, Eric could not tell why he was. The Doctor counselled Eric to take shares in the new mine, and keep his knowledge as a jewel for himself.

They had discovered a new stratum of manganese in the soil of Mattenheim; his son-in-law had been to see him, and had said a great deal to him about the favorable impression Eric had left behind him in the family there.

The Doctor took Eric back to the villa with him, and just as they were entering the courtyard there came a telegram to Eric. It was from Herr Sonnenkamp, and contained a request that he would let Frau Ceres know that at that very moment he was on his way to court.

The Doctor undertook the responsibility of holding back this news from Frau Ceres; she was near enough to delirium without that; he had ordered her a sleeping potion.

At table appeared Fräulein Perini, Manna, and Eric. After the first course, Fräulein Perini was called to Frau Ceres, and did not come back.

Manna and Eric were left alone.

"You were also in the church to-day," said Manna.

"Yes."

"I must beg your forgiveness, I have done you wrong."

"Done me wrong?"

"Yes, I thought you were without religion."

"So I am, according to strict opinions."

Manna said nothing; she laid the bit she was just raising to her mouth down again on her plate. Both sat silent, opposite each other, for a long while; each was seeking after a safe topic of conversation.

"You had a younger brother whom you have lost? I heard you speaking of him to-day," began Manna, blushing up to her temples.

"Yes, he was of the age of Roland, and this very day I have been wondering why I could not be as much to my dear brother as I have been to our Roland."

"Do not say *have been;* you are still, and will remain so to him. Roland repeated to me an expression of yours: 'Friends who can forsake one another were never friends.'"

"Certainly, but what comfort is that thought, if one no longer breaks the daily bread of life with another? I have known, however, that this separation must occur, I have recognized it as necessary; and still, for the first time, I see how almost constantly, for a long while, I have thought of nothing, felt nothing, experienced nothing, but that I forthwith connected Roland with it,—living only for him. Now the whole bent of my thoughts must be changed, a new object found, for the old chain is crushed, severed, cast off, and I feel so homeless and forlorn."

"I understand that perfectly," said Manna, as Eric paused for a moment.

She sipped the wine that stood before her.

Eric continued:—

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"I have a poetic friend, a peculiar man, who takes everything terribly hard: he is a man, who, with his whole soul, unreservedly and exclusively, forgetful of all else, loves his calling. He complained to me once how empty, lonely and forsaken he seemed to himself, when he had put the finishing stroke to a work which was then about to go forth from him into the wide world, to find its home everywhere, and to remain with him no more. He had devoted all his thought and feeling, night and day, to the creations of his fancy, and now they had wandered across the sea into another world, there to be no longer his. He could not withdraw his thoughts from them, and yet he could do nothing more for them, for their clearer presentation, for their perfect development. Yes, my dear Fräulein, and these are only creations of the fancy that forsake the man and make him so lonely. How much stronger must the feeling be then, when a living man, who has taken root in our soul, has forsaken us."

Manna was gazing full at him; big tears hung on her long eye-lashes, and she saw a dewy lustre in his; she folded her hands on the table, and quietly looked into Eric's countenance.

He felt this look, and said confusedly:—

"Forgive my egotism in speaking only of myself. I would not put any further burden upon the sister, and I can straightway give you the consolation which I have found for myself, and which will serve for you too. We have no right to give our soul one exclusive interest, and in that way lose sight of all the world beside; our soul must be satisfied to feel that there are other things in the world, of which account must be taken. Only, in the sense of desertion, while this inevitable wound still bleeds, one can do nothing else than wait quietly, and compose one's self in the thought of the fullness of the powers of the world, and the fullness of the duties and joys which lie in our fitness to use those powers. Ah, my dear Fräulein," he said, interrupting himself, "my mother likes to tell of an old parson, who cried out to his congregation:—'Children, I preach not for you alone, I preach also for myself; I have need of it.'"

A smile flitted across Manna's countenance, and Eric smiled too.

"Yes, so it is!" he continued, "it is not to the isolated, to the wandering, to the changeable, but to the Everlasting, we should devote our service; to the Spirit abiding in the universal, that we should be submissive, until he calls us to another post. Whither? Wherefore? Who can say? We experience the death of sweet individual relations, to enter anew into the grand community of the eternal whole."

"You are without religion—no; you shall not say that of yourself, you are not irreligious," exclaimed Manna.

"Many hold me for a laggard, others as cowardly and obsequious, because I believe in God, in a wise consistency and gracious providence, in the events which we meet in the history of mankind in general, and in the course of life of individual men in particular."

Manna's cheeks were glowing, she unfolded her hands, she stretched forth her hand as if she wished to give it to Eric, but, on its way, it seized the flask and she said:—

"We are so grave; and really, am I not a sorry hostess?"

She poured out the wine for him, he drank it at a draught, and while he was drinking, his gaze rested on Manna. She knew that he was contemplating her, she cast down her eyes.

"I must make still another acknowledgment to you," she said. She stopped as if waiting for breath, then she continued:—

"As you were speaking of your being now so sad because you can do nothing more for Roland, it was becoming clearer and clearer to me anew what happiness, what faith I also have lost."

She closed her eyes, she breathed heavily; then she opened her eyes once more, and said:—

"I believed at one time that one could pray for another, for one absent, a distant one, wherever and whatever he might be; I believed that one could sacrifice himself for another, and everything would be atoned for. Ah! now I believe so no more."

Eric made no answer; he knew with what a struggle this acknowledgment was wrung from her lips. Silent they sat opposite each other, and a thrill went through Eric. Now he knew that Manna loved him, for only to the man she loved could she have confided what she had. A spiritual cloud of joy and of grief seemed around him; this maiden loved him and he loved her, her with such a dowry from such a father.

Luckily, a servant entered and told Eric that his mother was expecting him.

"I will accompany you," said Manna, rising. She went to get her hat.

Eric was standing in the dining-hall; the plates and glasses and dishes were dancing before his eyes. Manna returned quickly; her countenance was more serene than ever; she was once more the young maiden, she had the clear voice and the brisk movement

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of youthfulness, as she made a gentle bow, and invited Eric to go with her. They were detained in the entrance hall; a package for Manna had been received.

"Ah! the silk dress from the Moravians," she said. "I suppose you know, Captain, that these people are not of our church, and still they get their support from the church. Or are you a contemner of the Moravians, also?"

"'Contemner' is not my word, but I find their conduct inconsistent. They are constantly preaching simplicity, renunciation of self, contempt of show, and of worldly enjoyments, and they trade in silken goods and Havana cigars; they rely on the sinfulness of other men just like the mendicant friar who says: 'I will not work and earn money, but of course others should earn money for me to beg.'"

"Take in the package," said Manna to the servant.

She walked quietly on with Eric.

CHAPTER XIV.

FROM SIBYLLINE BOOKS.

On the way Manna said: —

"Do you know that I had an aversion for you, when I came here?"

"Yes indeed, I knew it."

"And why didn't you try to convert me from it?"

Eric was silent, and Manna asked him once more: —

"Is it then a matter of so much indifference to you what people think of you?"

"No, but I am a servant of your house, and have no right to seek for any special consideration in your sight."

"You are very proud."

"I do not deny it."

"Don't you know that pride is a fault?"

"To be sure, when one makes pretensions and detracts from the worth of others. But I keep my pride for myself alone, or rather, I say with St. Simon: — 'If I consider myself I feel dejected, if I consider my fellow-men I feel proud.'"

"You are too clever for me," said Manna, banteringly.

"I don't like to hear you say so, for those are only empty words. No man is too clever for another, if each one says to himself: 'I have something in my own way too. You should not make use of such expressions. My respect for you rests upon the very fact that I never before heard from you an empty phrase. What you say is not always logically true, but it is true for you.'"

"I thank you," said Manna quickly, resting the tips of her fingers upon his hand; and, as if recollecting herself, she added hastily once more: —

"I thank you."

"I know not why it is; I have been delivered from an oppressive melancholy, and I feel as if it was a whole year since I was so sad. We have the good fortune to understand each other in the highest thoughts, and thought in the highest strain admits no measurement of time."

"Ah yes," rejoined Manna, "in the very midst of all my sorrows the thought has been present to me all day: 'Something is coming that will give you joy.' Now I know what it was. You were the friend and instructor of Roland; take me instead of him; be my friend and instructor. Will you?"

She stretched out her hand to him, and both gazed at each other with a look of joy.

"Ah, there sits your mother," cried Manna all at once; with a swift step she hastened to the Professorin, and kissed her passionately.

The Professorin was astonished to see her. Is this the same maiden at whose bedside she had sat the evening before, whose chilled hands she had warmed, to whom she had spoken the words of encouragement? Youth is an everlasting riddle.

Manna held her hand to her eyes for some time, and as she opened them once more, she said: —

"Ah, if I only were the bird up there in the air!"

The mother made no answer, and Manna continued: —

"I see everything to-day for the first time; there is the Rhine, there are the mountains, there the houses, there the men; a bird of passage, — yes, one that has been hatched in Asia, — is coming towards us, towards you. I am really so sorrowful, so sad; and still there is something within me singing lustily and singing always; 'Thou art merry, do not seek to be otherwise.' Ah, mother, it is dreadfully sinful to be as I am."

"No, my child, you are still a child, and a child, they say, has smiles and tears in the same bag. Rejoice that you are so young; perhaps something of childhood has been repressed in you, and now it is coming out. No one can say when, and no one can say where. We take things too hard altogether; things are not quite so frightful as we women imagine. I am quite cheerful since the Doctor was here. We may become accustomed to look at everything in a gloomy way; then it is well if some one comes and says: 'But just see,

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the world is neither so wicked nor so good as we persuade ourselves it is, and things run on either well or ill, and not in their logical course. My blessed husband said that many and many a time."

Manna seemed not to have heard what the Mother said; she exclaimed in a merry tone: —

"At this moment we are all ennobled, and still I do not perceive anything of the nobility in me, and yet one ought to be able to perceive something."

There was an unusually light-hearted tone in everything she said, and she continued: —

"Tell me now, how did you feel on the day you laid aside your nobility?"

"No trace of sorrow; it only pained me when my lady friends assured me strongly that they would always remain the same to me; and in this very assurance lay the conviction that it was otherwise, and they were all the time telling me how they had loved me, as if I were no longer living, and indeed to many I was already dead, for to them a human being that has lost the rank of noble, is, as it were, sunk into the realm of the departed spirits."

The Mother and Manna sat trustfully beside each other; for a time every sorrow was forgotten, every care, every anxiety.

Eric had left the Mother and Manna alone; he was standing near a rose-bush and observing how the rose leaves were falling off, so softly, so quietly, as if plucked by a spirit-hand. He gazed at the leaves on the ground, he knew not his thoughts. Roland, Manna, his mother, the terrible past of Sonnenkamp, all was confusion in his mind; he believed that he no longer saw the world as it is. If he only had some one to call him to himself. He felt how his cheeks were glowing, and how he was trembling.

You love and are beloved by this maiden, by the daughter of this man.

What is a daughter?

Every one exists for himself alone.

On the ground floor was his father's library; the windows were open; he went in.

It entered into his mind that there must be something in the manuscripts left by his father that would give him consolation and support; perhaps the spirit of his father would speak to his joyful and sorrowful perplexity. He began to search amongst the papers; everything seemed to be ready for his hand that was not wanted. He untied a bundle of pieces, the superscription of which bore the title, "Sibylline Books;" he took up a leaf.

"That's the thing!" he exclaimed.

He was standing with his back leaned against the open window; he heard his mother advising Manna to adhere right steadfastly and faithfully to her religious convictions. There were, it is true, forms and observances in it which she did not recognize as her own, but there was also in it the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, which alone gives us strength to bear misfortune and sustain joy.

"Mother," he called out, suddenly turning round.

The women started.

"Mother, I bring you something that carries on your idea."

He went out, showed them his father's writing, and said that he would read to them.

"Ah yes," exclaimed Manna; "it is good and kind of you to bring your father here; how I would have liked to know him. Do you not believe that he is now looking down upon us?"

Eric looked at his mother; he did not know what answer to give, and the Mother said: —

"According to the ordinary conception of the word 'looking,' we cannot conceive its being done without eyes. We have no conception how a spirit exists, but there is not a day nor an hour that I do not live in communion with my departed husband; he has come with me here, he will remain with me wherever I go, till my last breath. But let me see — what is it, Eric?"

"It has an odd title," answered the latter; "it treats of these things, which I cannot explain, and which perhaps no one can explain."

"Read, I beg of you," entreated Manna.

Eric began to read: —

"Two things there are which stand firm, while the heart of man is kept vacillating between defiance and despondency, haughtiness and faint-heartedness; they are *nature* and the *ideal within us*. The church is also a strong-hold of the ideal, firm and secure; although for me and many like me, it is not the only one.

"You say, nature does not help us. What help is she to me, when the crushing conviction of imperfection, of perdition, of guilt comes upon me and takes me captive? Well, nature does not speak; she simply permits herself to be explained, understood; she gives back the echo of what we call out to her. The church, on the contrary, speaks to us in our individual griefs, she takes us up into the universal; that is the great lesson of the expiatory suffering. We

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lay our grief aside when we think of the great grief which the greatest of hearts took unto itself.

"And what is the third? you ask.

"A third is, nature and the ideal combined, which together elevate and sustain us.

"What is the third? We call it art, we can also call it love, heroism. In this view of mine, all philosophy also belongs to art. What the genius of a man has created and fashioned out of himself as the evidence of his existence, insight, and will, appears in art as visible forms, looks down upon us in marble and in color, makes itself heard by us in word and in melody, allows us to be conscious and to feel sure that our fractional, half-expressed being has fullness and completion.

"These are the images, these are the deeds of genius, wrought in consecrated moments.

"Art does not console sorrow, it does not heal directly, but it brings before the eyes, it sounds in the ear, saying, 'Attend! there is a life, pure and perfect, that we carry within us. Art is an image of strength, of joy, of content, of courage; it does not reach out its hand to us, it simply enables us to compose ourselves in the knowledge, in the consciousness, in the perception of an existence reposing in itself outside of us; this we comprehend."

Eric interrupted himself, saying: —

"Here the remark is made: 'I knew a woman once, who would neither make nor listen to music during her period of mourning, showing what art was to her.'"

A pause followed.

Eric continued his reading: —

"In the hours of deepest tribulation I have found consolation, peace, restoration, solely in wandering among ancient works of art; others may derive the same benefit from music that I have from viewing these forms of antiquity. It was not the thought of the grand world which had here become bronze and marble; it was not the remembrance of the soul speaking out of these forms that held me fast, but something far different from either. Behold here, they seemed to say to me, a blissful repose, which has nothing in common with thee, and yet is with thee. A breath of the Eternal was wafted over me, a peaceful rest flowed into my troubled heart, filled my gaze, and calmed my emotions. In listening to music I could always dwell dreamily upon my own life and thought, but never here.

"If I were only able to unfold whither this led me, how I wandered in the infinite, and then how I went abroad into the tumultuous whirl of life, feeling that I was attended by these steadfast, peaceful, godlike forms, that I was ——"

Eric broke off abruptly.

Manna begged: —

"Do read on."

"There is nothing further. My beloved father, alas! left only fragments behind him."

"This is no fragment, it is complete and perfect. No man could say or write anything further," said Manna; "nothing else is needed but to allow it to have its inward work. Ah, I have one request — give me the sheet."

Eric looked towards his mother, who said that she had never yet parted with a single line of her husband's.

"But you, my child," she said, "you shall have it. Eric shall copy it for us so that we may not lose it."

She gave the manuscript to Manna, who pressed it to her heaving breast.

"Oh, I never imagined," she cried, "that there was such a world in the world."

Every drop of blood seemed to have retreated from her face; she begged the Mother to be allowed to go into the house; she would like to be alone, she was so weary.

The Mother accompanied her. Manna reclined upon the sofa, and the curtains were drawn; she fell asleep with the manuscript in her hand.

The Mother and Eric sat together, and Eric determined to make use of this first opportunity, when there was no immediate duty binding him, to publish the incomplete and fragmentary writings left by his father, as there would be found many to make them into a whole within their own souls.

He now felt all at once free and full of life; now there was something for him to do; and he could fulfil at the same time a pious, filial duty, and his duty as a man. He could make essential additions from his own knowledge, and from his father's verbal statements.

He went back to the library, and was deeply engaged in the writings, when Manna entered.

"You here?" she said. "I wanted to take one look at the outside of all the books on which your father's eye has rested. I must now go home, but I have to day received a great deal more than I can tell."

"May I accompany you?"

Manna assented.

They went together across the meadow to the Villa.

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CHAPTER XV.

EVERYTHING IN FLAMES.

WITH lingering step they walked by each other's side, Manna often looking aside to survey the landscape, and yet conscious all the time that Eric was observing her. And then Eric would turn away, still feeling that her eye rested upon him.

"You are happy in possessing the thoughts of such a father," said Manna, feelingly.

Eric could make no reply, for the feeling oppressed him, how the poor rich child would be overwhelmed, if she knew what he did concerning her own father; he had no conception that Manna's words were wrung out by this very tribulation.

"I cannot become the heir of my father's thoughts," he said, after an interval. "Each child must live out his own life."

They continued to walk side by side, and it seemed to them, at every step, that they must stop and hold each other in a loving embrace.

"Roland and my father are now on their way home," said Manna.

"And Herr von Pranken also," Eric was about to add, but refrained from doing it.

Manna perhaps felt that he might think strangely of her omitting to mention Pranken's name, and she asked: —

"Were not you and Baron von Pranken formerly intimate friends?"

"We were comrades, never friends."

They were silent again; there were so many things to be spoken of, crowding upon both of them, that they did not seem to know where to begin.

The evening bell tolled, and Manna saw that Eric did not remove his hat. She trembled. Every thing stood as an obstacle between them; even the Church separated them from each other.

Manna wore around her waist, beneath her clothes, a small hempen cord that a nun had given her as a perpetual reminder of her promise to assume in public the hempen girdle. It seemed to her now as if the hidden cord were suddenly tightened, and then it appeared to have become loosened. With her left hand she grasped tightly a tree by the road-side, and breathed heavily.

"What is the matter?" asked Eric.

"Oh, nothing, and every thing. I thank you for remaining with us. Look there — there above — high over the castle-tower, two falcons are flying. Ah, if one could thus mount aloft, and leave behind and forget all that is beneath! What was life to me? A labor, a labor upon our shroud. I wanted to live above the world and do penance, to implore heaven's grace in another's behalf — in behalf of another! Ah, I can do it no longer — no longer."

She passed her hand over her forehead, and what she said she knew not. She continued walking, and yet she felt as if she would like to remain in the same spot.

A woman, who was mowing the third crop of grass in the meadow, called out to Manna, saying that her father had got well, and would help take in the hay to-morrow.

"I wish I was yonder mower," Manna exclaimed.

"Forgive me," answered Eric, "if I cannot help expressing my surprise at your uttering a wish like that."

"I, like that? Why should I not?"

"You have to-day shown such clearness of thought, that I cannot comprehend your giving utterance to an expression so common on the lips of thousands. What does it mean, when one says, 'I would like to be somebody else'? If you were some one else, you would still not be a different person; and if you retain the consciousness you had before, you would not be some one else. To speak in this way is not only unreasonable, but, as I view it, irreligious."

Manna stopped, and Eric continued,—

"We are what we are, not through our own instrumentality, but through an eternal ordination for which we have no other name but God. We must try to reconcile ourselves to what we are, and to be happy in our condition, whether poor or rich, beautiful or ugly."

"Well, I will never again indulge or utter so irrational a thought," replied Manna, extending her hand to Eric. She trembled.

They walked along in silence. It began to be dusk in the shaded paths; neither of them spoke.

"I see my mother yonder," said Manna, sighing deeply as she stopped.

Did she not want to meet her mother while walking with Eric? She had often walked with him, and he seemed like a brother; there was no harm in being alone with him.

"I bid you farewell here," Manna added in a low tone. "What a day this has been! Has it been only a day?"

"And as this sun now going down," interposed Eric, "will again return, and be the same in good days and in evil days, so you have a true friend in me, one whose eye watches over you, and will watch over you until it shall be closed by death."

"I know it! I know it!" cried Manna. "O God, I'm sure of it!"

She trembled violently.

"I entreat you, go now," she added.

Eric turned away, but looking back, he

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saw that Manna was kneeling at the foot of a large fir-tree, while the descending sun shone upon her countenance, as she stretched her folded hands up towards heaven. Then she rose up; he hastened to meet her as she came towards him, and they were enfolded in each other's arms.

"Heaven and earth, do what ye will!" she cried. "Now come what will!"

They held each other in a close embrace, as if they had but one breath, and were eternally joined in one kiss.

"You are mine! mine! my father, my hope, my world! Oh, Eric, leave me not again, — never again!"

"I leave you?"

"No, you cannot. Heaven will forgive, — no, will bless. See, Eric! Everything is on fire, the trees, the grass, the Rhine, the mountains, the sky, everything is on fire! Ah, Eric, if the whole earth were in flames, I would hold thee in my arms, and in thine arms would I gladly die. Take me, kill me, do with me what you will, I can't do otherwise."

"Come, look up. Is it indeed you?" replied Eric. "You know not how I have struggled. Now you are here, now you are mine! You are mine, you call me thine. Oh, call me so once more."

In trembling accents, now beginning and now breaking off again, they related to each other their struggles with themselves and with the world around them, and they recognized each other's purity and truthfulness of soul; and in proportion as Manna had hitherto closed her heart to Eric, the whole fountain of her love now welled up and overflowed.

As they stood with hands clasped, Eric said, —

"O Manna, how I wish you could be so happy as to see your own look."

"And you yours. Every one who sees and knows you must love you. How then can I help it, who see and know you as nobody else can?"

They kissed each other with closed eyes, and over them the trees rustled in the gentle breeze of evening.

On that bench where he had once sat with Bella, Eric now sat by Manna's side, and a thrill passed through him as he thought of that time. He shrank from the recollection. With love's penetrating glance Manna noticed the passing emotion, and asked: —

"Have you too had to wrestle and struggle so sorely, before you saw and acknowledged that it must be?"

"Ah, let us not recall it; care and trouble, conflict and struggle, will be sure to come. Now is the marriage of our spirits; there must be no other thought, no discordant tone. We are blessed, twice blessed. I know that you are mine as I am yours. It must be so."

They embraced; and as she cried, "O, Eric, I could bear you in my arms over all the mountains!" He saw subdued in her a wild, lawless, passionate strength of nature, such as a daughter of Sonnenkamp must inherit.

No one who had seen the modest, humble, gentle child of the morning could have believed that she could become so impassioned. Eric felt himself taken possession of by a stronger power.

"Ah, yes," she exclaimed, as if she read his soul. "You think I am a passionate child, do you not? You've no idea how untamed I am; but you shall never see it again, never, rely upon that." She sat by his side, stroking his hand, and with an arch glance she said: —

"Ah, dear Eric, you don't know what a foolish child I am, and you are so learned and wise. Now tell me truly without any reserve — you can tell me what you please, for I am yours now — tell me truly, do you honestly believe that I am worthy of you? I am so ignorant and insignificant compared with you!"

"Ignorant and insignificant? You can freely, fearlessly, and without any qualification, match yourself with any one else in sincere aspiration, in pure self-devotion, and indisinterested affection. No one can surpass you here; everything else is of no account. Knowledge, beauty, wealth, — these do not bring love."

"And I will learn a great deal from you," said Manna, gently caressing and kissing his hands. "Ah, keep on talking; say what you will; it is music to me, you cannot think how like music it is to hear you. And do you know that I have heard you sing too? Twice. Once in the great festival, and once here on the Rhine."

"And do you know," he replied, "that I saw you in the twilight at the convent?"

"Yes. You looked at me in this way." She tried to imitate his look.

"And at that time, when we returned from the festival, a dozen of the pupils were in love with you; but I was afraid of you, and yet I cannot now imagine it. What will they say in the convent? They will look upon me as a hypocrite in regard to you, and — oh, Eric, how much I renounce, but I renounce it willingly. And oh, how rejoiced Roland will be!"

"But your parents?"

"Yes, my parents!" said she. "My

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parents!" Her voice became fainter, her countenance turned suddenly pale, and she drew closer to Eric, as if she were cold. He put his hand upon her head, and played with her tresses, while she held his other hand closely pressed to her lips. No words were needed, they could not speak, for each wanted to say to the other: Do you know what I would say?

"Why do you tremble so, all at once?" asked Manna.

"Ah, I wish you were not rich."

"I wish so too," said she, in a drowsy tone. "Let us be quiet. So—let me sleep here only half a minute. Oh, how like music is the beating of your heart!"

She reclined her head for a few moments against his breast, and then said:—

"A hundred years have passed over me, a blissful hundred years. Now I am strong and fresh and wide-awake; now forget all I have done and said, all except one thing, that I am yours, and I love you so long as I breathe, and you are mine."

"You wanted to become a nun, and I—I wanted also to renounce the world."

"But are you not a Huguenot?"

"I did not mean that, my Manna. I wanted to renounce what is called the world, and be wholly devoted to a life of thought."

"And can you not do that if I am yours?"

"No. But why speak of this now? I am no longer alone, I am myself and you too!"

"And I too am you as well as myself," repeated Manna. "Now I must go to my mother," she said, raising herself up; "no one is to know about us, neither your mother nor mine, no one."

"Shall I see you this evening in the garden?"

"No, it will be better not to see each other until to-morrow; I cannot—I must first compose myself. Ah, I deny myself. Early to-morrow morning."

She now untied a blue silk scarf that she wore around her neck, and placed it about his.

Another kiss, and still another, and they parted.

CHAPTER XVI.

REJOICE IN YOUR LIFE.

Eric sat a long time on the bench; night came on, and he saw a light in his mother's house. He knew that she and his aunt were together, and he fancied that he heard the tones of a harp, but yet it was too far off for the sound to reach him. But the tones resounded within him, and the question darted through his mind: How will Manna bear it when she learns the terrible secret? And canst thou share in possessions so acquired? How Sonnenkamp will rave! What will Pranken do? The world will say, it was nicely contrived; while the father and the betrothed were absent, he has with his mother's help stolen away the daughter of the house. Let the world come on! Love conquers everything!

He saw a light in Manna's room, and heard the window shut; he looked for a long time up to it, and then went to the courtyard and ordered the groom to saddle a horse.

The groom said there was none there except Herr Sonnenkamp's black steed.

"Saddle him then."

"I dare not do it. My master allows no one to ride him."

"Do as I order you."

The horse was led out; he opened his large eyes on Eric, distended his nostrils, and tossed back his mane as he neighed.

"That's well!" exclaimed Eric.

He mounted and rode off at a tearing trot. He felt perfectly safe on the horse, who seemed to take delight in his free rider.

Where will he go? Far away—away to the world's end. He felt buoyant, as if the weight of the body were removed, and he could fly away into the wide, wide world.

He rode now down the mountain to the village where Claus lived. All that he had experienced on this road, and all that he had thought, thronged in upon his mind at once, and he even looked to see if Roland were riding by his side.

Roland! How strange! It struck him as an immeasurably long time since Roland had left him; it was the recollection of a far-off event, that he once had instructed a youth on the verge of manhood.

He gazed at the fields, at the vineyards, as if he must ask them: How is it, how will it be when I call you mine—a bit of the world my own! Trees, meadows, vine-hills, fields and vineyards danced before his eyes.

He rode into the village.

Here all was quiet. He drew up at the fieldguard's house, he knew not for what reason. The blackbird was singing alone in the still night, 'Rejoice in your life.' She got no farther on in the tune, and this melody, so old and yet so good, now accompanied Eric, and chimed in with the hoof-beats of his swift steed.

From the village he made a bend, and rode up the height where he had formerly sat with Knopf. He had asked Knopf: What would you do if you should come into the possession of millions? And now it

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seemed to him that a hundred-pound weight lay upon his shoulders. He called out into the night:—

"No, I shall not become the possessor of millions, no, never!"

Now Weidmann's plans rushed into his mind. Above, on the height yonder, hundreds of men were living on their own acres, which once they had never thought of owning, free and happy in the independence secured through that man.

The horse looked round at his rider, as he exclaimed aloud:—

"That would be the thing? But on property so obtained? No!"

Quietly he rode down the mountain, and came in sight of the villa, and the glass of the hot-houses, but he turned his horse's head again. Yes, he must tell one man, one only. He rode to the Major's. Like a wanderer who sees a distant gleam of light, he was glad at heart when he saw the light twinkling in the modest house.

The Major, who had heard the clattering of hoofs — and he knew the black horse's trot — called out of the window: —

"Herr Baron von Lichtenburg, are you here so soon?"

"Up to this time my name has been Eric Dournay," replied the horseman. He dismounted, tied the horse to the garden-fence, entered the house, and was welcomed cordially by both of the inmates.

"What's to pay? Is all well?" asked the Major.

Eric relieved the anxiety of the Major, who kept saying: —

"Just see, Fräulein Milch, — don't be afraid to put on your spectacles, — just see! our Herr Eric looks like another being. You're in a fever; how red your lips are!"

Eric could not reply; he could not say that they were still burning with kisses.

The Major went to a cupboard, and mixing a powder in half a glass of water, returned to Eric. Putting his hand on Eric's forehead he said, —

"You had better take something." He then shook into it another powder, so that it effervesced, and Eric had to drink the hissing draught, without another word. The Major made the sage remark that there was nothing in the world so good for all sorts of excitement as a Rochelle powder.

Fräulein Milch, who saw very plainly that Eric had something to communicate, was about to leave the room, but he called out, —

"You are to hear it too, you and my friend here. I entrust it to your true hearts. I am betrothed."

"To Manna?" said Fräulein Milch.

Eric looked amazed, and the Major cried: —

"God be thanked that she lives in our days; in the past dark ages they would have burnt her for a witch. She knows everything, and sees into the future; nobody could ever believe it. But here you have it. As we were sitting together, she said: This very evening Eric and Manna have been betrothed. And when I laughed, she said: Don't laugh, I'll go for a bottle of wine. Look, comrade, there it stands; and she said: They will come here this very evening together. Well, she isn't yet an infallible prophetess, for you've come alone, comrade. Come here, let me kiss you, my heart's brother."

He gave him a hearty kiss, and went on: —

"You have no father, and I, — I'll go with you to the altar when you're married. Give me your hand. And people say, there are no miracles in these days! Every single day there's a miracle wrought, just exactly as much as in the good old times; only we know how to explain it to-day, and in old times they didn't understand it."

Fräulein Milch had uncorked the bottle and filled the glasses.

"Drink with me, my son!" cried the Major. "Drink! real Johannisberg."

They touched glasses, and the Major, emptying his, kissed Eric again, and then said, —

"Whew! You've learned to kiss. Give one to Fräulein Milch, too, — you've my permission. Fräulein Milch, no flinching! Come here — there — give her a kiss. She's a friend, — you've not a better in the world except your mother, — and you'll find out she's more than the whole world knows; you deserve to."

"I beg, Herr Major," Fräulein Milch interrupted with trepidation.

"Very well," said the Major, in a soothing tone, "I'll say nothing more. But now a kiss."

Eric and Fräulein Milch kissed each other, the Fräulein's face turning red as fire.

They now engaged in a friendly talk together, the Major taking special delight that Pranken would not get the magnificent girl and her millions; but his chief satisfaction arose from the convent's being circumvented.

As Eric returned home, late at night, he heard the blackbird still singing: Rejoice in your life!

There was a light in Manna's chamber, but Manna was standing at the window.

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CHAPTER XVII.

THE SERPENT IN EDEN.

As Manna stood at the window, looking out into the darkness, she laid her burning hands upon the window-sill, uttering brief exclamations to herself of hope and desolation, of rejoicing and complaint. Only the stars saw her face with its changing expression of rapture and of agony, and her kisses were given to the empty air. She looked up to the well-known stars, and all their glittering host seemed but the reflection of Eric's beaming eyes.

"Why am I alone? Why should I ever be alone again for an instant?" she asked of the night.

A feeling of utter loneliness came over her. She thought of the nun whom she had seen the day before at the station, who looked neither to the right or to the left, going from convent to convent, and from one sick-bed to another, and who wanted nothing that the world could give. How would it be if a voice should now say to her: Thou art mine; turn thy gaze, put off that disfiguring disguise; look around; let others look at thee and greet thee with smiles; hope, despair, be joyous, be sad, be not forgetful of all else in subjection to one fond, painful idea!

It seemed to Manna as if she were standing upon the verge of a dizzy precipice, now about to be dashed over it, and now drawn back; she looked round, for she felt as if Eric's arm were actually about her, and lifting her up into the world. Into the world! What a world! She passed her hand over her face, and the hand seemed no longer to be hers. Turning back into the room, she threw herself on her knees.

"Woe is me! I love!" she cried. "No; I thank thee, O God, that thou hast laid this trial upon me. This trial? no, I cannot help it! Thou, Thou who art Love itself, whom a thousand lips name, and whom yet none can comprehend, forgive and help me, help him, and help us all! May I live in him and in all that is holy and great, all that is beautiful and pure! Here I lie, slay me — slay me, if it is a sin! Heimchen, thou, my sister, a part of my own soul, thou didst flutter a moment in the air, like a blossom fallen from the tree. I, I must, amidst storm and tempest, remain upon the tree of life. O, let the fruit of good deeds ripen in me, O Thou to whom I pray, and whom he reveres, though he prays not, he whose thought is prayer, whose action is prayer, and whose whole life is prayer."

She rose up and stood again at the window, gazing long, in a reverie, up at the starry sky. Out into the night flew something from Manna's window and was caught in the branches of a tree; it was the girdle which she had taken off.

As Eric was sitting alone in his room, he heard a gentle rustling, and was startled as if he had seen a ghost. What is that? He opened the door, and Manna stood before him. They silently embraced, and Manna said: —

"I come to you; I am always with you in my thoughts, — in everything. Oh, Eric! I am so happy, and so miserably wretched. My father — do you know it?"

"I know everything."

"You know, and still love me?"

She kneeled down and embraced his feet. He raised her, and seating himself by her side, they talked together of the dreadful secret.

"Tell me," she asked, "how you have borne it?"

"Ask rather, how Roland will bear it!"

"Do you think he will hear of it?"

"Certainly, who knows how soon the world ——"

"The world! the world!" exclaimed Manna. "No, no; the world is good, the world is beautiful. Oh, thanks to the Unsearchable for giving to me my Eric, my world, my whole world!"

Calmly, clearly, and with wonderful insight, Manna apprehended everything; but in the very midst of the recital, she suddenly threw herself upon Eric's breast, and sobbed forth:—

"Oh! why must I have this knowledge so young, so early; why must I experience and overcome all this?"

After Eric had calmed and soothed her she went away.

An eye had watched, an eye had seen. But they knew not that an eye had watched and an eye had seen.

In an eye had the morning, on awakening, Manna cried, "I am beloved! his beloved! Is he awake yet, I wonder?"

She opened the window. A young starling, that was now, even in the autumn, building its nest, found the thin hempen cord on the tree before Manna's window, snapped it up in its bill, and flew away to weave it into the nest. Eric was below in the garden, and Manna called to him:—

"I'll be down immediately." And in the early dawn they embraced and kissed each other, and spoke words of encouragement to one another, needed for what must be borne to-day, for to-day her father and Pranken were expected to return.

They went towards the green cottage

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hand in hand, sat down where they had sat with the Mother on the previous day, and waited for her waking. In the midst of all the joy and all the suffering of a secret love, encompassed by perils, they wanted to learn what had taken place at the capital. They could not anticipate what had really occurred.

Eric let Manna return alone. He told her that he had been at the Major's the evening before, and he wanted to go again, in order to request him and Fräulein Milch to keep the matter a profound secret.

As Eric was going along the road, a carriage came up; his name was called, and Bella got out.

"I am rejoiced to meet you alone. Do you know that we never see each other alone in these days? But to-day I shall not be with you. Clodwig sends his greeting, and an earnest request that you will visit him at Wolfsgarten. He is lonely, and you are lonely, and it will be pleasant for you to pass with him these first days of separation, and to stay with us until you have got somewhat reconciled to the absence of your dear pupil. Clodwig has grand projects in your behalf. You can go back at once in our carriage to Wolfsgarten, and I shall be here with my sister-in-law until matters are arranged. Where is the dear child?"

Eric escorted Bella to the villa, but he could not utter a word. Fortunately, Fräulein Perini came up, and he could hand Bella over to her. He hastened to Manna and informed her in a few hasty words that Bella had arrived. She looked up, half roguishly, half pitifully, and asked:—

"Is it true that you once loved her?"

"Yes and no. Are you jealous?"

"No, for I know that you have never loved, never; you can never have loved any one but me. Come, Eric, let us now go up to her, hand in hand, and acknowledge at once what we are to each other, and also before the world. Let us have no single moment of deception or concealment. I have the courage to confess all, and I am happy to have it to confess. Regard to the world must not deprive us of a moment, of one single moment, in which we can see each other, freely take each other's hand, and appear before the world, as we are in reality, one."

Eric had great difficulty in bringing Manna to use foresight and prudence; he desired her, as the first token of their relation as husband and wife, to conform to his will.

Manna wept, and said peevishly:—

"Very well; I will obey you, but I'll see no one."

Eric tried every means to induce her to see Bella, but she refused, saying:—

"Can you, the pure, the good, allow me to be so debased for an hour? How am I to endure it, how am I to conduct myself, if she salutes me as her sister-in-law?"

Eric told her that Bella wanted him to go at once to Wolfsgarten, in order to spend with Clodwig these few days in which he was unsettled. And when he pointed out the abnormal position of a dependant, Manna tenderly stroked his face, saying:—

"You good man, you have to serve; yes, I know now what this is for you, the pure, lofty soul, whom all ought to serve. Ah, how much have you, dear heart, been obliged to bear! But it is well, for otherwise we should not have become acquainted with one another. Come, I shall be able to do it. I will make myself do it."

She went to receive Bella, and she had self-control enough to do it in an unexceptionable manner.

Eric soon went away, and Bella was amazed to see the glance with which Manna followed him. Manna was desperate, talking much and in an unusually lively way, so that Bella was puzzled afresh.

The Major was now announced; he came to congratulate Manna, and he did it in his cordial and clumsy way.

"Do favor us with congratulations this evening, Herr Major, after my brother has returned."

Manna turned away.

Bella had seen enough; it suddenly flashed across her: She loves Eric. But no, that cannot be! She offered to embrace and kiss Manna, but Manna begged her, with tears, to leave her in quiet to-day.

Bella stood up erect and looked at Manna; it was the Medusa-look, but Manna bore it quietly. Without another word Bella strode out of the house, and left the villa. What she thought, what she meditated, who can tell? She herself did not know, and no one at the villa was at all anxious about it.

After Bella had gone, the Major stepped up to Manna, who was standing motionless, and said:—

"You have done bravely, child — you've stood fire well — that's good! You shall have a backer in me, and in Fräulein Milch too; and if they bother you here in the house, you'll come to us; be easy, you're not all alone in the world. You'll ask her pardon, you'll find out — don't speak — you've a backer in me — and she told me to come here, she'd go to the Professorin; she knows where there's need. I only wish

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when you've been nine and forty years together you may be to one another what we are — you'll know — you'll have your eyes opened. Very well! Some people can hold out bravely, she's done so. Very well — I haven't blabbed any thing,— have I blabbed?"

Manna smiled amidst her tears at the odd, incomprehensible, and yet affectionate speech of the good Major.

Whilst Manna and the Major were standing together, Bella went through the park.

Hate, deadly hate was excited within her, and her eye seemed to be seeking something on which to vent her rage. What can I destroy here? what can I do to make people angry? Here are pyramids of flowers — if I should throw them all in a heap, if I should nip off the choice plants? — that would be childish! She looked round for something in vain.

She had forced herself to appear friendly, but the constraint was evident. She especially hated Eric and his mother; there was a different tone all through the neighborhood, and she had nothing to do with it; these people had given it. Who are they? sermonizing pedagogues, — nothing but eternal second-hand traders in sublime thoughts! And she, Bella, the brilliant, the admired, who could once confer happiness by a single word, she stood in the background! But they must be off, these parasites, and they should be made to feel who they are, and they should know who has found them out, who has demolished them!

She thought about Eric, about the Mother, about the Aunt, as if looking everywhere for some hook by which to grapple them and dash them to pieces.

She went restlessly to and fro several times between the villa and the green cottage, and at last went into the Professorin's. Here she met Fräulein Milch.

Stop! this is just the person! she shall be the hammer to hit the others.

When Bella entered, Fräulein Milch got up, bowed very politely, and was about to go.

"Do remain," urged the Professorin. "You are already acquainted with the Countess Wolfsgarten?"

"I have the honor."

Bella looked at the modest person whom she was desiring to demolish, and then said:—

"Ah, yes, I recollect. The Major's housekeeper, if I do not mistake?"

"Fräulein Milch is my friend," interposed the Professorin.

"Your friend? I was not aware of that. You are very kind."

"Fräulein Milch is my friend, and is my noble assistant in the work of charity."

"Ah, yes, you peddle out the money of Herr Sonnenkamp."

It was uncertain whether this was addressed to both the ladies present, or solely to Fräulein Milch.

Bella saw how the Professorin's face quivered, and she felt greatly encouraged. Now she had found out the point to begin at. This Professorin had inflicted a wound upon her by means of her son — no, not that, but she had wounded her personally, she had assumed a first part that did not belong to her.

And Bella continued:—

"This wasteful expenditure on the abandoned, on notorious tipplers, will shortly cease."

The Professorin now requested Fräulein Milch to leave her; she had never kissed her yet, but to-day she embraced her affectionately and gave her a kiss. She wanted to calm her wounded feelings, to make her some amends, and show the countess how highly she esteemed the person she had so rudely attacked, who appeared so defenceless, or who did not choose to defend herself. After Fräulein Milch had gone, Bella said,—

"I cannot conceive how you can be so intimate with this person; you dishonor thereby all who stand in relations of friendship with you."

"I think that any one whom I esteem, and whom I unite to myself in friendship, is placed by this fact in a position of respect, and I have a right to expect that every one will show it."

"Of course, of course, so long as you are here. But if you leave the vicinity before long——"

"Leave the vicinity?"

"The work here is now accomplished, and —"

The Professorin had to sit down. Bella's eyes flashed; she had attained what she wished; she had torn off all the tinsel from these people, who were forever making a parade of spirituality, and decking themselves out with sublime ideas, and now here they were naked and helpless.

In a very courteous tone she said, —

"Oh, I assure you, I should be very sorry to anticipate Herr Sonnenkamp's dismissal."

The calm bearing which the Professorin had been accustomed to maintain in all extremities, now failed her for the first time.

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She had had an extensive observation of life, but never had she seen this, had never regarded it as even possible that there should be such a thing as pure malice, which has no other motive than to be malicious, and derives its joy from the suffering of others. In the feeling that this additional experience must now be hers, and in the endeavour to settle this in her thought and give it lodgment as an actual and accepted truth, she lost all ability to make any resistance.

She cast up a glance at Bella that ought to have overcome her, but Bella was resolved not to give way a single hair's breadth; she must have something to rend in pieces, and as Eric could not be got at, his mother must answer instead. She continued talking for a long time, using very polite phrases, but the Professorin hardly listened, and scarcely noticed when she took her leave.

Bella rushed triumphantly back to the villa across the meadow-path, got into the carriage, which was standing ready in the yard, and returned to Wolfsgarten.

Her passion for destruction was sated, and she felt relieved, and in good spirits.

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BOOK XII. — CHAPTER I.

THE NIGHT BEFORE THE EXECUTION.

On the journey to the capital, Sonnenkamp and Pranken were astonished at Roland's fluency and mental activity; he was the only one who expressed himself freely, for both Sonnenkamp and Pranken could not entirely repress a feeling of anxiety. They appeared to be so confidential and open with each other, and yet Sonnenkamp was continually asking himself: Do you know it? and Pranken, on the other hand: Do you know that I know it?

But neither of them spoke out. How were they to do it? Pranken wanted, when the revelation took place, to appear as the innocent, the ignorant, the deluded individual; he had been imposed upon, he as well as the rest of the world, and more than all, the Prince himself. The Prince had conferred the title of nobility — how was Pranken to do otherwise than confide in the man!

Sonnenkamp on the contrary was undecided, and he was glad that Pranken was determining everything; it was no longer a question of will, all was settled and must proceed.

He looked through the coach-door every now and then, and put out his hand, as if he were going to lay hold of the handle, spring out and flee. What a bold game it was he was trying his hand at! He was angry with himself that, close upon the last critical moment, he allowed a feeling of apprehension to come over him. He could not help declaring to Pranken that he felt very much excited. Pranken thought this quite natural, for elevation to the nobility is no small affair. And now, in the conversation that took place, Sonnenkamp discovered the cause of his timidity. Those Huguenots, mother, aunt, and son, with their double-distilled transcendental notions, had brought around him an element of weakness; it would be as well to throw them aside, politely, of course, but they must go their way, like instruments that have done their work, like paid-off workmen.

In this thought of casting something from him, there was a sense of power which restored him to himself once more.

It was not merely allowing others to act for him, he was an active agent himself; he let the puppets dance, for all men are puppets to him who knows how to govern them. He looked smilingly over at Pranken; this man, too, was his puppet now. He began to whistle merrily but inaudibly.

It was late in the evening when they reached the capital. Roland went to bed directly. Pranken took his leave, saying that he had to make a necessary call.

"Don't forget that you are a bridegroom," Sonnenkamp cried out after him with a laugh.

For the first time in his life was Pranken troubled by such a jest; it hurt him because it came from Manna's father, and because he was really going on an errand very serious and moral in its nature and object; he was going to the house of the Dean of the cathedral.

The house was in the garden behind the cathedral, hidden from the whole world, and amidst a quiet that was never broken by the bustle of the capital.

Pranken rang, a servant opened the door, and Pranken was not a little astonished at hearing himself instantly called by name. The servant was the soldier whom he had employed for some little time as an attendant. He received Pranken's commission to inform him personally the next morning, at the Victoria Hotel, whether the Dean could receive him alone at eleven o'clock.

Pranken turned away, and he smiled, when, still thinking of his father-in-law's admonition, he stopped before a certain house. He knew it well, the pretty, quiet house that he himself had once furnished, the carpeted stairs, the banisters with their stuffed velvet, and everything so cosy, the bell up-stairs with its single note, the cool ante-chamber full of green plants, the parlor so cheerful, the carpets, and the furniture of the same pattern of silk throughout, a green ground and yellow garland. Pranken liked the national colors even here. In the corner stands an alabaster angel holding in its hand a fresh bunch of flowers every day. Many a time too, the angel has to bear a woman's jaunty hat, and many a time too a man's hat. And then the door-curtains. Who is laughing behind them? No, he passes on.

He stopped at a shop window with large panes of glass; when going to that cosy little house, he had always brought with him from this shop some trifle, some comical little thing — there are many new things of that kind in it now; he enters and purchases the very latest.

The young salesman looks at him inquiringly, Pranken nods and says: —

"You can show me everything."

And then the hidden treasures of the establishment are shown to him; he does not take anything, however, but says that he will make a purchase some other time, and goes off with his trifle.

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No, it is only for a jest, for a farewell. He wishes simply to ask little Nelly what people are saying of him; he is vexed at his being troubled about the matter, and still he is tempted to make the inquiry.

He is not aware that he has rung—he goes up-stairs—he feels for the key in his pocket—he has quite forgotten that he hasn't one any more.

The door is opened, the maid looks at him with astonishment. Nobody is in. A lamp of pale red glass is burning in the balcony room; the little alabaster statue is smiling; Pranken has another lamp brought to him; he will wait. He looks through the rooms, he recognizes the chairs, the sofas, everything is still as he had arranged it.

A perfume strange to him pervades the room; it must be the fashion now,—one always falls a little behind the times in the country.

The clock of the cathedral strikes, the theatre performances must be over. On the table lie photograph albums; Pranken looks through them, he searches for his own picture; it is no longer there, but there are other faces that he does not know. He shuts the albums.

There is a book lying on the table, too; flowers culled from the German poets "for women by a woman's hand." Pranken begins to read it. They are strange beings, these poets! He stands up by the fire-place, glowing coals are sparkling in it; but really there was no fire-place, and no glowing coals; for they never burned, but were always piled up in that way; fire-place and coals were only an elegant ornament of the room.

The cathedral clock strikes again; still no one comes. At length Pranken takes out his card, and leaves it on the bouquet which the alabaster statue holds in its hand; he leaves the place. It is better so. You have acted bravely, as you meant to do — of course.

He smiled at his virtue.

Pah! He would have to laugh and give a little play to his exuberance of spirit again one of these days; this everlasting morality begins to be tiresome. But Manna ——

All at once Pranken felt a pang shoot through his heart, as if he had inflicted a wound on Manna.

He shook his head, and laughed outright at the childishness into which he had fallen. And still he could not shake off an impression, that at that hour something was happening to Manna; he knew not what it was, but the feeling possessed him.

He went on hurriedly.

The military club house was still brilliantly lighted, but Pranken passed it by too. He turned back to the hotel. With great satisfaction he retired to rest without having again seen Sonnenkamp. He wanted to read a little while in the little book that was quite filled with a piny odor from the twig which lay in it; the twig was bare, but the falling leaves were preserved like a relic. But he could not endure the words of the book, he felt a certain awe of it to-night.

While Pranken was out in the town, Sonnenkamp grew discontented at being alone. He wanted to be with new people, live men, who could divert his thoughts. He sent for the Cabinetsrath.

The latter came soon, and Sonnenkamp sat down well pleased by his side, and asked what it meant that the Prince had not sent his patent, but chose to give it to him in person.

With much freedom and sarcasm, the Cabinetsrath ironically expressed his admiration of his gracious master, and described his character. He said that no one could really understand a ruler who wished to rule without advice, particularly in the exercise of that prerogative which had been allowed to remain in his hands without the interference of the Chamber of Deputies, — the conferring of orders and of nobility. Sonnenkamp heard with astonishment how the Prince designated everything as "mine"; my manufacturers, my university, my freemason lodge, my agriculturalists, my Chamber of Deputies. The Prince had the best will in the world, but he lived in continual fear of the democrats, communists and liberals, whom he classed together; he was convinced, that every one who did not coincide with the government was a walking barricade from behind which shots might be fired at any moment. He would like to have everything go well with all men, and he had a very fine sentiment which a chamberlain had once composed for him, and which he brought out in moments of elevated feeling. If I knew that all men would be bettered by it, I would renounce the throne and do away with the civil-list. But as he was sure that all men would not be bettered by it, he could remain as he was, in quiet possession of both. He had two hobbies, the theatre and the welfare of the capital. He liked to have very wealthy people attracted to the capital, so that a good deal of money might be made out of them. And he had done a great thing, he had modified essentially the strict rules of ceremony; strangers who formerly were, without exception, debarred of the privilege of appearing at court, had access to it now, if they only spent a good deal of money in the city and were present-

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ed by their ambassadors. The Prince does this out of a pure desire for the welfare of his people, for he called all the inhabitants of the capital "my people," even the unyielding democrats contained in it; they had unpleasant peculiarities, it is true; but they were still "my people."

The Prince took a special interest in Sonnenkamp, because he had been told that the latter was intending to build a large palace for his winter-residence in the capital in such a situation that it would be an ornament to the castle park, having it front on an avenue which at present led into a new part of the city. The Prince flattered himself that this would be of great benefit to his people.

The Cabinetsrath related, besides, that Sonnenkamp's affair had taken a particularly decisive turn in consequence of Clodwig's having, in the expression of his opinion, said that, aside from the injudiciousness of creating a new nobility, it appeared doubtful to him whether German sovereigns individually possessed the right to do it. The Prince was beside himself at this remark of the old diplomat, whom he had always regarded as a concealed democrat; and so, partly in consequence of Clodwig's boldness, Sonnenkamp's affair was decided hastily and without further ado.

Sonnenkamp heard all this with delight, and the Cabinetsrath cautioned him expressly to remember that the Prince was really very modest, and not merely modest in words; he liked to say that he was not a man of genius, and it was very hard to find the best bearing to use towards him. The Prince was offended by the flattery, if any one praised him and combated his opinion of himself, and still it would not do to support him in his modesty. Sonnenkamp was advised to say as little as possible; he might exaggerate the apprehension he really felt: timidity would find favor with their gracious master, who was always secretly pleased at inspiring awe.

Sonnenkamp was quite calm once more. When the Cabinetsrath was gone, he rang, and ordered the newspaper. He read it entirely through, even the advertisements; this put him upon another course of thought. Again and again he read the official news at the head of the paper, official appointments, military promotions, and grants of pardon; such things were sprinkled along through the whole year after the grand distribution of orders was over. He was already thinking to himself how it would appear in that part of the paper in the morning, that His Highness had, in his graciousness, seen fit to elevate Herr James Sonnenkamp and his family, under the title of Baron von Lichtenburg, to the hereditary dignity of nobles. And, what was more, the newspaper of Professor Crutius must publish it.

Proud and erect, he strode for a long time up and down the chamber. Then he recollected that the Cabinetsrath had informed him that the Prince liked certain ceremonies, and that he would have to make oath with his bare hand. He looked at his hand. How would it be if the Prince asked about the ring on his thumb?

"Your Highness, that is an iron ring that I have worn since my eighteenth year," said Sonnenkamp suddenly, as if he were standing in the presence of the Prince.

But then again, he asked himself why he should expose himself to the question. It might still be possible to take the ring off; the scar could no longer be visible. With burning face he put his hand in water until it was nearly numb, but the ring did not come off. He rang; Lootz came, and he ordered him to bring ice. He held his hand on the ice, the ring at last loosened about the thumb; it rubbed hard over the knuckle, but at last came off. Sonnenkamp examined the scar that had been concealed by the ring. Could any one now tell that it had been left by a bite?

He was enraged with himself that he had awakened this remembrance to-day. Of what use was it?

He rang for Lootz; he wanted to ask him what he would take the scar on his thumb to be. But when Lootz came he let the question go, for it might have excited curiosity; he gave the steward a commission for the morrow, and finally sought rest in sleep. He did not find it for a long while; for it seemed to him as if a chilly current of air were continually circulating about the bare thumb. When he doubled up his fist he felt it no longer, and so he finally went to sleep with his fist clinched.

CHAPTER II.

DRILLING UNDER FIRE.

The sparrows were twittering with one another on the roof, but the hack-drivers were chattering still more busily before the Hotel Victoria, when, in the morning, Sonnenkamp's horses and double-seated carriage waited before the porch of the hotel.

The little hump-backed driver, who always led the talk, now held the first place, and naturally spoke first. He informed his companions that to-day Sonnenkamp was to be made a count, yes, perhaps even a prince, for he had more money than a prince. Unluckily, the first hack was just then

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taken by a stranger, and the little driver deeply regretted that he could not be on hand when Herr Sonnenkamp was coming out. He recommended the others to give the Count a cheer when he was getting into the carriage.

But it was a long while before Herr Sonnenkamp came down out of the hotel, for he was walking up and down the spacious hall, clad in black, with white cravat, and with the order on his breast. The Cabinetsrath was walking by his side; he said that he could well understand that Herr Sonnenkamp should be very much excited, but that he would be only so much the more easy in mind at noon. Sonnenkamp was all the time biting his lips, and more than once changed color.

"You are well, are you not?" asked the Cabinetsrath.

Sonnenkamp said yes; he could not say that that bare thumb of his was so painful. When he was not looking at the hand, he had a sensation as if the thumb were swelling up into a monstrous size, and the pulse-beats in it felt like the blows of a red-hot hammer.

He examined his hand frequently, and felt comforted when he found that he was suffering under a delusion.

Lootz came. Sonnenkamp took him aside, and he informed him that Professor Crutius regretted that he was unable to pay him a visit, being obliged at that moment to set about preparing the evening edition.

"Did you bring the morning edition with you?"

"No, it will not be issued until eleven o'clock."

"Why didn't you wait for it? it is nearly eleven now."

"I thought that you might want something else, sir, before going up to the castle."

"Very well, give me my overcoat."

Joseph was standing near at hand all ready with it; Sonnenkamp took leave of Roland and Pranken, who were going to ride out with some companions; he requested them to be back at the hotel at twelve o'clock precisely.

For the last time the commoner Sonnenkamp descended those steps, to ascend them next as a Baron. The Cabinetsrath walked by his side.

When he entered the carriage below, the hack-drivers, as they had been recommended, wanted to raise a cheer, but they could not bring it out: it was of no use to try without the dwarf who knew how to lead off; they stood all together in a knot staring at Sonnenkamp, and took off their hats.

Sonnenkamp acknowledged the salutation most graciously.

The Cabinetsrath regretted that he could not go with him; he simply ordered the coachman to stop before the great gate of the palace.

Pranken left Roland alone, as the Ensign had promised to call for the latter when he got back from the drill ground. With an unusually quiet tone and modest manner, Pranken bade good bye until they met again at table, for Sonnenkamp had ordered an elegant little lunch for four, himself, his son and son-in-law, and the Cabinetsrath.

Sonnenkamp dashed along through the streets of the city; the people on foot stood still. Many who knew him saluted him, and many too, who did not know him; for a foreign prince might sit in such a carriage, and deference must be paid to a foreign prince.

The horses trotted on gaily, as if they knew to what honor they were carrying their master. Sonnenkamp lay back in the carriage, and played awhile with the order upon his breast. This token gave him an encouragement; for why was he apprehensive in taking the second step, when he had felt no apprehension in taking the first, and no danger had yet made its appearance?

The carriage drove past a building with many windows. Sonnenkamp knew it. It was the editing and printing establishment of Professor Crutius. Knots of men were standing in front of it, some of them reading a copy of the paper; they looked up and nodded, as the handsome carriage passed by. Sonnenkamp would have liked to stop to get a paper; he had already grasped the check-string, intending to give Bertram the signal to stop, but he dropped it again.

Why is this? Why is he so anxious to get the newspaper to-day? Ah, men are better off in the desolate wilderness, where not one human being is to be seen, where there are no newspapers nor anything of the kind. So Sonnenkamp thought to himself, as he drove through the lively capital to the palace of the Prince.

A jolt suddenly startled him; the carriage was stopped. Around the corner, a battalion of soldiers was approaching with loud music. The carriage had to stop until the soldiers had all passed by, and it required some effort to keep the horses in check, on account of the noise.

Now they were all past; Sonnenkamp looked at his watch. It would be a terrible thing if, at the very outset, he should have missed the appointed minute, and have

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been obliged to excuse himself to the Prince. Are you then so far a prisoner? Are you then so bound to the very minute?

He was almost ready to call out to the coachman to turn back; he would have nothing to do with the whole affair.

Again he was angry with himself at being so powerfully excited without cause. He let down the carriage window, took off his hat, and was delighted to feel the refreshment of the cool breeze.

Bertram proudly drew up the carriage before the grand portal. Both the sentinels stood still; they were waiting to see whether they should shoulder or present arms. The carriage door was opened, the sentinels remained motionless, for only a man in black clothes, with a single order, stepped out.

Joseph accompanied Sonnenkamp to the large high-studded porch, which was white and richly ornamented with stucco work. At the foot of the step were two handsomely chiselled marble wolves; they looked at Sonnenkamp in almost a friendly way; and really, everything looked as splendid as could be imagined. Sonnenkamp made a sign to Joseph that he might give something, suitable to the occasion to the lackeys in attendance here; he had provided him with an uncounted handful of gold for the purpose; he could trust Joseph.

The porter in grand livery, with broad hat and gold-tipped staff, asked whom he should announce.

Sonnenkamp and Joseph looked at each other in embarrassment. Joseph was discreet enough to leave the answer to his master, and Sonnenkamp did not know whether he ought to say Baron von Lichtenburg or Herr Sonnenkamp.

Pooh, what did it signify giving the old name to this lackey? This name appeared to him so repugnant, thrown off for good like a worn-out shoe; it was so hard to understand how he had borne it so long, without being ashamed of it before the whole world. Finally Sonnenkamp answered with evident condescension: —

"I have been ordered to wait upon His Highness."

He felt badly to be obliged to use the word "ordered" before Joseph — he, Sonnenkamp, had been "ordered" — but he wished to show the footman at any rate that he was acquainted with court phraseology.

The footman pressed a telegraphic bell; a valet dressed in black appeared at the head of the staircase, and said that the Herr Baron had been expected for two minutes, and must make all the haste possible. It seemed almost as if an avenging angel from heaven were announcing here below some shortcoming or transgression.

With trembling knees Sonnenkamp stumbled up the carpeted staircase; he had to draw on his gloves on the way up, saying silently to himself meanwhile: —

"Keep yourself easy now."

At the top of the staircase a second valet appeared, white-haired, in short black knee-breeches and high black gaiters, and said: —

"Do not hurry, Herr Sonnenkamp, His Highness has not returned yet from the drill ground."

Sonnenkamp felt like knocking the first valet down for having put him into such a state of anxiety. He regretted that he had commissioned Joseph to give every one of the servants a piece of gold; he hoped that Joseph, after all, was a rogue, and would keep the gold for himself, and give the cursed attendants none of it.

The white-haired valet conversed freely with Sonnenkamp, and informed him, that he had been with Prince Leonhard in America; it was a hateful country, without order and without manners; he thanked God, when he got home again.

Sonnenkamp did not know how he ought to take this freedom; but the best way was to put up with it silently. He listened with assenting nods, and thought to himself, What a way they have of doing things here in the palace! It is just as if the people in it didn't walk on their feet; everything is so mysterious; as if something was going on every moment that had nothing at all in common with the life of other men.

The white-haired valet requested Sonnenkamp to sit down while he waited.

Sonnenkamp did sit down, and drew off his right-hand glove; he wanted to be able to do it without difficulty when the time came to unglove that hand for the oath; and then he presented some gold pieces to the white-haired valet.

The experienced valet withdrew, bowing, to the end of the room; he knew the dread that was felt by those who are not accustomed to the court, and would leave the man to compose himself.

Sonnenkamp sat still; again those wild pulsations began to hammer away in his thumb; he called for a glass of water.

The white-haired valet called to another, this one to a third, and the call for a glass of water went far into the distance.

A very old clock that was standing on the mantle-piece struck the quarter hour. Sonnenkamp compared his watch with it,

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and found that it was very slow; he determined in future to set his watch by the clock in the palace.

Sonnenkamp was alone: and yet he little thought that through the clear edges of the ground glass in a door behind him, two eyes were fastened upon him, and that those eyes were rolling savagely in their sockets.

Just as the glass of water made its appearance, it was announced that Herr Sonnenkamp might enter. He could not even once moisten his lips.

He entered the large hall, where it was bright daylight; but he staggered back, for directly opposite to him hung an engraving, a work of Alfred Rethel's. A strong-limbed man with the murderer's knife still in his hand, bending and stooping, was making his escape over a heath; the bushes on the road were blown aside by the wind, and above the fugitive hovers a supernatural shape, holding a sword, with the point downward, directly over the head of the fleeing criminal.

Sonnenkamp rubbed his eyes.

What is the picture here for? Or is it only a creation of his own fancy?

He did not have time to decide this matter for himself, for just then the Prince entered noiselessly from behind the curtain of the door, over the thick heavy carpet. He was dressed in full uniform, with a broad band thrown over the right shoulder and across his breast. He carried himself very erect, and merely nodded slightly. He bade Sonnenkamp welcome, and excused himself for having kept him waiting.

Sonnenkamp bowed low, without uttering a word.

CHAPTER III.

A BLOOD-RED STREAK.

"Is your son with you?"

"Yes, your Highness."

"Is he still determined to enter the army?"

"He is anxious to do so."

"I like the noble-looking youth, and will take care that the ladies do not spoil him; they would like to make a plaything of him. Has he already applied for admission?"

"Not yet, your Highness. I wished to have the application made in the name that your Highness is pleased to confer upon me."

"Quite right," answered the Prince. On his writing-table were two telegraphic knobs, a white and a black one; he pressed the white one; the old valet entered, and the Prince said, —

"I desire that there shall be no one in the ante-chamber."

The attendant withdrew. Sonnenkamp gazed questioningly at the Prince, who said: —

"Your elevation to rank has been a difficult matter for me. You have many enemies, of course."

Sonnenkamp's eyes closed for a moment, as if some one were brandishing a dagger before them; and then he gazed at the picture; it was no creation of his fancy, it was hanging there behind the Prince. Why did the Prince have it in his cabinet?

"You are a man of noble ideas," began the Prince anew; "you have shaped your life yourself, I respect you for that; such men deserve the highest honors. I am glad that I can confer them on you, as I can."

Sonnenkamp wanted to say that he was well aware of the opinion of the Count of Wolfsgarten, but that he did not question the absolute power of the Prince; but it seemed better to be silent. Why should he embark in a discussion which would only lengthen out the scene? And besides, the Cabinetsrath had strongly urged upon him the necessity of discretion.

The Prince now went over once more all the noble and good things which Sonnenkamp had done. The latter listened modestly with downcast eyes; he really found it very trying to hear it all now in his present position; the Prince might defer it until a party, or a hunt, or some other occasion would offer a favorable opportunity. Sonnenkamp was of the opinion that the whole court, as well as himself, looked upon all these stories about nobility as nothing more than an excellent necessary humbug; he was astonished to find the Prince so solemn and earnest in a tête-à-tête. Or was this part of the humbug?

But the Prince was going through with what was before him as became a man moved by duty, however unpleasant the duty might be; he evidently considered it proper to declare his motives, in order to exhort the man to strive after things still more noble. He seemed to himself at this moment a kind of priest, who, concealed from the whole world in the inner sanctuary of the temple, is consecrating a novice; he was much moved himself. The first chamberlain had not been wrong; the Prince had returned to the palace some time before the hour appointed, but he had been quietly preparing himself beforehand for this solemn ceremony.

Since Herr von Endlich's elevation to the nobility, the Prince had been in the habit of using certain set phrases; no one knew

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who had originated them, but he often repeated, like a lesson learned by heart, the words — "Yes, yes, it is an established rule, an excellent rule, that the monumental should not be treated lightly. One should not carve in stone, or cast in bronze, a momentary jest or whim, to look awkward and out of place as time goes on; such things are only fit to enliven the passing moment. The transient should not be transformed into an enduring monument." He did not show distinctly what was in his mind, but it was easy to see what he meant. He had not done well in making a pun with the name he had conferred upon Herr von Endlich, for what is more monumental than elevation to rank? The present occasion, therefore, he wished to make a thoroughly solemn one.

Patiently, and like a child bending forward to receive confirmation, Sonnenkamp bowed his head. Several times the Prince stretched out one hand, several times the other, several times both together, while he was speaking of the blessings which men strongly armed with the knowledge of the higher duties spread around them. Sonnenkamp expected every minute that he would lay both hands upon his head and bless him, and although the Prince was younger than himself, he would have received the blessing with modesty and humility, for this man had been consecrated by the custom of ages for the dispensation of honor.

At this moment Sonnenkamp tried to be right monarchically inclined; if it had been demanded of him, he would, with every prescribed formula, have solemnly foresworn republic, constitution, and whatever was firmly fixed by the power of law.

In the midst of his remarks the Prince took up a roll, covered with blue velvet, that was lying on his table; he took off the covering and drew out a parchment roll that crackled and rustled, and bore a broad glistening seal.

Sonnenkamp took off his right-hand glove; now comes the moment when he must take the oath and receive the parchment that is to make him a new man. He was ready to be made a new man; he tried to be deeply affected, and sought for the only thing in the world that could really affect him deeply and make him tremble. And now in the middle of the Prince's cabinet he saw before him a church-yard covered with snow in a Polish village, and there was his mother's grave; he did not hear what the Prince was saying while he held the parchment in his hand, but his words were undoubtedly very moving.

But now, what does that mean? the Prince laid the parchment down again on the table, and, sitting down, said: —

"I am glad to see, in your eyes, how profoundly you feel this moment. Pray be seated." Sonnenkamp sat down, and the Prince continued: —

"Let us discuss one more subject, in a quiet way. You have held many slaves, have you any still?"

"No, your Highness."

"Was it only a longing for Germany that induced you to return to the Old World, or was it also your finding the condition of affairs in the vaunted Republic unbearable?"

"The latter, your Highness, although the former had something to do with it. I see trouble brewing in the United States, which — I say this only to your Highness — cannot be settled except by the establishment of a monarchy in the New World."

"Good, you must explain the matter to me more fully some other time. I am glad to learn — very glad. It is our duty to receive instruction from those who understand a particular subject thoroughly. What do you think of slavery in general?"

"That is a very extensive subject, your Highness; I have put my views upon it in writing; I shall have the honor ——"

"No, just tell me concisely the kernel, the principle of the thing."

"Your Highness, the niggers are an inferior race, that is an established physiological fact; it is idle dreaming — though honestly maintained by many — which leads directly to the ruin of the nigger himself, to set him down as entitled to the same rights with other men."

"And would you —" asked the Prince "No, I will put another question to you. How do you regard a man who traffics in beings of this inferior race?"

Sonnenkamp started up immediately from his chair, but he sat down again quickly, and said: —

"Creatures, your Highness, who cannot help themselves, and who never will be able to, are protected as they would not otherwise be by being considered as property; that so called generosity, without profit, without material regard either for property or for honor, is like a soul without a body; one can conceive it, but it does not exist, at least in the world we see before us."

"Very fine — very good. You are a thinker. I myself believe that the negro is better off with a master. But how is it when you see with your own eyes the child sold away from the mother, and in that way every tie of family forcibly torn asunder?"

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"But, your Highness, that happens very seldom, or rather hardly ever," replied Sonnenkamp with great composure, "for it would be a material disadvantage, and would make the slaves less inclined to work; but should it happen, any sentimental feeling about the matter would be only narrowing the sentimentalism from a wider sphere to a special case. A brute that has outgrown the care of its parents knows the parents no more, mates do not know each other after the brooding time is past. I will not say——"

"What is it?" said the Prince, interrupting him suddenly.

The white-haired valet entered.

"Why am I interrupted?"

"His Excellency the Minister begs your Highness to open this immediately."

The Prince opened the letter, and took out a printed sheet; a red line ran along the margin of it like a streak of blood. The Prince began to read, he looked up from the page towards Sonnenkamp: he read on farther, the paper cracked and trembled in his hand; he laid it down on the table and said:—

"Confounded audacity!"

Sonnenkamp was standing at the table, and it seemed to him as if the two telegraphic knobs had changed into eyes, one white and one black, and from the green table a fabulous creature of strange form was shaping itself,—a queer monster with a white and a black eye, and that it was emerging from the deep, moving along sluggishly, and staggering from side to side. As if in the frenzy of fever he sat there collecting all his strength. The Prince, looking now at the paper, now at Sonnenkamp, at last walked up to him and held out the paper; the rustle of it was like the stab of a knife as he said:—

"Here, read it—read it."

Printed in large letters on it were these words marked with red ink:—

"A humble suggestion for a coat-of-arms and escutcheon for the ennobled slave-trader and slave-killer, James Heinrich Sonnenkamp, formerly Banfield, from Louisiana—"

Sonnenkamp read only these words, and then stared up at the Prince, on whose face was a distorted smile.

"Give me your hand," said the Prince, "give me your hand and tell me, on your word of honor, that it is a lie. Give me your hand, and we will then crush the impudent scoundrels."

Sonnenkamp staggered back, as if a shot had struck him. What was all that he had enjoyed in life compared with the anguish of this moment?

He stretched out his hand doubled up, as if he wished to say: I can break you like a slender twig. But he opened his hand, and held it on high with the forefinger pointing to heaven.

Then suddenly there appeared in front of him a large powerful negro, rolling his eyes and showing his teeth.

With a cry more like that of a wild beast than of a human being, Sonnenkamp fell backwards upon his chair.

The figure in front of him gave a yell, and behind him yelled another—it was Adams, who had rushed in.

"Prince! master!" cried the negro, "this is the man who took me, who carried me off as a slave, and pitched me into the water. Let him only show his finger, it still bears the mark of my teeth. Let me have him, let me have him! I'll suck his blood for him, I'll choke him! Only let me have him a minute—let me have him! then kill me!"

Adams caught hold of Sonnenkamp's hand from behind, and clutched it as if he would crush it.

Sonnenkamp struggled with all his might to throw off the powerful hold, wrestling with the negro clinging fast to him; and his anguish was doubled, for he was not only wrestling, but, as he thought, he could see in the mirror opposite two beings, one was himself—was it really he?—the other a devil, a demon.

Is it all only a fever-fancy, or is it reality?

The Prince's finger constantly plied the telegraphic bell on his table; servants began to pour in, in great numbers.

The Prince cried:—

"Take Adams out. See that he keeps quiet; and the rest of you show this man out of the palace."

Adams was torn away from Sonnenkamp; he roared like a bull that has received the fatal stroke, and foamed at the mouth.

The Prince took the parchment with the red seal up from the table, and turned away with it.

Then Sonnenkamp rose up; he glanced at the Prince, his eyes almost starting from their sockets, and shrieked out:—

"What would you have? and what then are you? Your ancestors, or connections, or whatever else they were, sold their subjects away into America, and got a fixed price for a shot-off arm, for a lucky corpse. You have trafficked in white men, and sent them across the sea. And what are you now? Secret proprietors of gambling hells

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at home. Pah! I bought my slaves from a prince, bought them honorably, but what did you do? You sold off your subjects, and on Sundays those who were left behind had to say amen in the church, when the Lord of lords was supplicated for your welfare. Are you ashamed of this kinship? But I tell you he was a man, and deserved better to reign than ——"

He was not sure whether the Prince still heard what he was saying; the servants seized him and gave him to understand that he must be quiet, that such loud talking was not permitted there.

Sonnenkamp had fallen; he was raised again, and led down the staircase. He looked about him often, as if he wanted to say, I shall never tread these halls more.

Below, the carriage was waiting. Sonnenkamp leaned on Joseph and said:—

"Joseph, sit beside me in the carriage."

That was all he said.

When they had reached the hotel, and got out, the little fellow was in the midst of the hackmen; they all had courage enough now, and cried out:—

"Long live the Baron! hurra! again hurra!"

Sonnenkamp could not utter a word. Was the world mocking at him?

He could not tell how he got up the steps. In a moment he was sitting in a large chair; he gazed at the mirror, as if in that room too the reflection of the negro must confront him there.

He sat there, staring, without speaking a word.

CHAPTER IV.

DISSECTED.

SONNENKAMP leaned back in the arm-chair and stared before him; then he looked at the chair itself and caught hold of the arms of it, as if he wanted to ask, Does the chair I am sitting on still hold together? Then, as he laid his hand upon his breast, he began to quiver like an aspen; he felt the order, tore it off with vehemence, and cried:—

"So it is, I must struggle with two worlds. I must fight with the old one as I have with the new. Cheer up! the new hunt is beginning. I will not suffer myself to be put down. I must either despise myself, or despise you; we will see who is strongest, who is most worthy."

It breathed new life into him to think that the world so despised him.

"Just so! I can do that too; I despise you all!"

"But the children! the children!" something whispered to him. When he was waging war in America, the children know nothing of it. He rang and asked:—

"Where is Roland?"

"The young master has not got back yet; he was here at twelve o'clock, and asked for you, but he rode away again with some comrades."

"He should have waited," exclaimed Sonnenkamp. "Well—it is better so," he said, calming himself.

Again he was sitting alone; his mind turned inward on itself, and now the matter was clear to him. So it was that the men outside the printing-office had been reading; it was through mockery that the poor devils in front of the hotel had raised a cheer for him.

He stood up and looked through the window. The hack-drivers were standing together in a group, and the dwarf was reading to them from the newspaper; they may have felt that Sonnenkamp was looking at them, for all at once they turned their gaze upwards, and Sonnenkamp as if struck by a hundred bullets staggered back into the middle of the room; then he sat down and held his open hands together between his knees. He had gazed into an abyss; it had dizzied him, but he was composing himself with courage and decision. He knew how at this moment they were talking about him all over the city, in carpeted hall and plastered stable—they are saying: I wouldn't take all his millions to be in his shoes. Very assiduously did Sonnenkamp picture everything to himself—and what will be in the paper in the morning?

Sonnenkamp sat silent a long time, buried in himself; at length a letter was brought to him, bearing a large seal. Sonnenkamp started; could the Prince have regretted what had happened, and have gone so far as to join with him, and, truly great, thus defy the world? Long he stared at the seal; but it was only that of the newspaper office, and the weighty letter contained several pieces of gold. Crutius, with many thanks, returned what he had received at the time he had gone up to the villa, and explained that he would have sent it back much sooner if he had not desired to pay it with interest.

"Pshaw! how contemptible," cried Sonnenkamp. For sometime he weighed in his hand the gold that had been scornfully returned to him. So it is then! Every one dares to scorn you, and you must be quiet when every one pities you.

He had a revolver with him, he sprang up; he took it up, waved it in the air, turned it over. Yes, that was the course

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to take! To the printing-office and shoot down this Professor Crutius like a mad dog! But in this country that cannot go unpunished. And should he, then, shoot himself, be thrown into prison, and have his head cut off?

"No, no! we must work the thing differently," he said to himself. He laid the revolver back again in the case, and rang. Joseph came, he was trembling. Who knows what the man-eater is going to do with *him* now?

"Ah, master!" said Joseph, "I remain with you. The coachman Bertram has taken service here in the house. I do not want double and treble wages, which people say you will have to give now."

"Good! Who was your father, is he still alive?"

"Yes, indeed; my father is in the School of Anatomy, and when the corpses of the suicides came to the dissecting-house, my father often used to say: Yes, yes, when one has done that most frightful thing in the world, he must be dissected into the bargain. Excuse me, Sir, I too am quite confused. But the Professorin told me once, that every one has done something in his life out of the way, and so we should stand by and be true to one another."

A peculiar smile flitted over Sonnenkamp's countenance; the poor rogue was playing the kind-hearted, and bestowing forgiveness upon him.

"So? the Professorin?" said he. In a moment his thoughts were in the villa, in the park, in the hot-houses, in the greenhouse. He wanted to ask Joseph whether the Professorin had said anything more definite, and whether she knew all about him. But he kept back the words, and simply said that he wanted to send some messengers.

"And do you see to it too, let Roland be hunted up and brought here at once. Let Herr von Pranken be sent for, too," he cried out after Joseph.

Roland was hard to find, but Pranken was not to be found at all, for he was in a place where no one would ever have thought of looking for the life-enjoying Baron.

The head waiter entered and said that dinner was ready, and asked when it should be served up. Sonnenkamp looked hard at the questioner. The creature surely knew that he would eat nothing, and had only come to spy upon him; perhaps there were many people down below who would like to hear how Herr Sonnenkamp bore himself just now. Sonnenkamp rose proudly, looked at the head waiter with a repelling glance, and told him that he need not ask, he would let him know when he wanted what he had ordered; and at the same time he charged him to see to it, that no one should be allowed to enter his room without having been announced.

One thing after another passed in confusion through his brain; Joseph had told him about the suicides who are dissected in the dissecting-room. Sonnenkamp contemplated himself from head to foot, and then opened his mouth as if he must utter the thought that was now running through his soul. He is being dissected, not bodily, but spiritually, by every stinging, scandal-loving tongue.

CHAPTER V.

THE CONFESSION OF A WORLDLING.

At the very time that Sonnenkamp was entering the palace, Pranken was going into the deanery; he was detained a few minutes by the passing soldiery, he had to salute many a comrade covered with dust, on foot and on horseback. He was going to that quarter of the city wherein resounded no clang of military music; here all was still, as if everything were holding its breath, except that in the church the organ notes were still swelling. He went in, he saw the Dean, a large powerful man, just returning into the sacristy. Pranken sat awhile in a pew, until he felt sure that the Dean had reached his house; then he left the church. The servant was standing in the open door; he said that the reverend gentleman requested Pranken to walk in and wait a few moments. He was shown up the staircase; it was a fine large staircase of the old chapter house. At the top, a young priest who was just coming out was shutting the door very quietly, even reverently; the young priest came down the left staircase while Pranken went up the right.

Pranken had to wait awhile in the large room where an open book lay on the table. He looked into it; it was a scheme of ecclesiastical preferments; he smiled. Good, the priests, like the military, have a printed list, too. This simile gave him new courage.

The Dean entered; he had a book in his hand, between the leaves of which he had inserted his forefinger. He saluted Pranken, making a gesture with the book, and begged him to sit down; he offered him a seat on the sofa, and seated himself opposite him in a chair on casters.

"What do you bring, Herr Baron?"

With a peculiar smile, Pranken answered that he brought nothing, but on the other hand came to get something. The priest

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nodded, looked into the book once more at the place where he had his finger inserted, and laying it aside said: —

"I am ready."

Pranken began to explain, that he had chosen the Dean in preference to any one else, to be his confessor in an affair which only a man of noble birth could properly appreciate and give advice about. The Dean grasped his chin with his left hand, and said with great decision, that after ordination and the new birth there was no longer any nobility; he had no different power from that of the son of the poorest day-laborer.

Pranken felt that he had made a mistake at the outset, and went on to say in a very humble way, that above all things he regarded the priestly dignity as the highest, but that still it was well known that the very worthy Dean knew something about the circumstances of life which he wished to lay before him. Then he gave a concise account of his past life; it was that of a son of a noble family until his acquaintance with Sonnenkamp. At this point he went somewhat into detail, and confessed that his thinking of Manna as his wife, Manna the daughter of the millionaire, was at first nothing more than a jest, a pastime. He related how Manna had unexpectedly entered the convent; and with great earnestness he declared that it was Manna that had wakened in him the knowledge of the higher life. He dwelt particularly on his momentary determination to become a priest; but he was now of another way of thinking; he was still too worldly in his views, but he hoped, however, in union with Manna, to lead a life devoted to the highest of all interests.

With quiet attention, frequently closing his eyes, and again opening them quickly, the Dean listened to the story.

At last Pranken paused, and the reverend father said: —

"That, I suppose, is the introduction. I must now tell you on my part that I know this Herr Sonnenkamp and his daughter. I was staying not long ago with a brother priest in the town which is part of the same parish with Villa Eden — is not the place so called? I have seen the maiden; it was then reported that she was going to become a nun. I have also seen the park and the house; everything is very stately, very beautiful. And now I beg of you, proceed and tell me, without any further digression, what you wish from me."

Pranken went on to say rapidly, that in conjunction with the Cabinetsrath he had brought matters to such a point that Sonnenkamp was at this very hour receiving a patent of nobility.

Again he paused, but the Reverend father asked no more questions, but simply looked at him inquiringly.

Fastening his gaze upon the table-cover, Pranken now went on to tell what he knew of Sonnenkamp's past life; he had, up to this moment, believed that he might regard it with indifference, but at the present time — just since yesterday — when Sonnenkamp and his family were to be made of equal rank with himself, it let him rest no longer.

"I don't understand you," said the Dean. "Do you find yourself overburdened in your conscience, because you, although you knew what the man is, still endeavored successfully to procure for him an honorable and distinguished preferment? in a word, his elevation to the rank of noble?"

"Yes and no," replied Pranken, "I am not clear on that point. I could say that I am innocent, for I have never been asked my opinion on the matter, and still——"

"Go on, I think you are on the right path; 'and still'—you were going to say."

Pranken resumed his speech like a pupil in examination, and collecting his thoughts said: —

"Thank Heaven that there are living beings sent into the world, to whom we can and must tell what we do not acknowledge to ourselves. I must still, however, confess that my open and undisguised relation to Herr Sonnenkamp is perhaps something more than an expression of an opinion."

"Right, quite right! You have come to me then, to learn, at the very last hour, what you ought to do?"

"To tell the honest truth, no. I simply wished to have you give me something, an injunction of some sort to ease this constant torment and fear of discovery."

"Wonderful world!" rejoined the Priest. "Wonderful world! You would like to live in sinful enjoyment, and still, at the same time receive an 'absolving benediction.'"

Pranken's thoughts wandered involuntarily to Nelly's house near by, but with a powerful effort he called back his thoughts.

Both men said nothing for a short time; then the Dean asked: —

"Does this Herr Sonnenkamp know that you are acquainted with his past life?"

"O no, and he must never know it."

Again there was a long pause.

From the cathedral near by came the stroke of noon; the bells rang out the Angelus, the Priest rose and said a low

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prayer; Pranken did the same. They seated themselves again, but neither spoke. Pranken was becoming indignant; he was angry with himself for having come here; however, there was no help for it now; with repressed anger he said at last: —

"Very Reverend sir, I have confessed everything to you now; I beg of you to advise me."

"Should I advise you to forsake Herr Sonnenkamp and your bride?"

Pranken shrank back.

The Dean proceeded, rising, and walking up and down the parlor: — "That is the way with you. You will have advice, you children of worldly pleasure, but only such advice as enjoins no privation upon you; you will have such counsel only as enables you to accomplish your purpose, whatever it may be, with a pacified conscience. You want mustard for the digestion of heavy dinners, do you not?" said he, turning round suddenly.

His eyes sparkled.

"Reverend sir," said Pranken, in a tremor, "bid me forsake Herr Sonnenkamp and Manna, and I promise you that I will do it forthwith. Only think what will become of the maiden, and shall not what has been so earned be used for higher ——"

"Stop!" said the Dean, interrupting him, and extending his hand with a gesture of rebuke, knitting his brows and pressing his lips tight together. "You think that you can bribe us with these millions? You are another of those, who, with outward veneration, still believe within themselves the clergy want nothing but money, nothing but power. No, we want none of your money, so won by marriage or inheritance!"

The Priest was standing at the window, looking up at the sky, in which dark clouds were gathering; he seemed to have quite forgotten that Pranken was there, and the latter finally said to him,—

"Reverend sir, do you wish me to withdraw?"

The Priest turned round quickly and said, motioning with his left hand,—

"Sit down — sit down."

Pranken obeyed.

"Now I will tell you something. What you have done to the nobility, for you have done it, and not simply allowed it to happen, is your concern and that of the nobility; for us, your grades of honor are matters of no moment. Whether a man is a commoner or a noble, it is all the same to us. But I tell you this"— the Priest hesitated, and resting his elbow in the hollow of his right hand took hold of his chin with his left; he seemed to be arranging his words with quiet deliberation — "I tell you this: you must be true now, you must not forsake this man and his daughter. You must share everything with them, whatever the worldly honors may bring; you must consider yourself as linked to them, and thank God in humbleness of heart that you have an opportunity of devoting yourself, and leading your new family to the pure and noble sacrifice of self."

Pranken started up, kissed the Priest's hand, and exclaimed,—

"I will, I promise you. Keep your eye on me; you shall see that I will go through with whatever you enjoin upon me."

"Go then, and God be with you; you have a heavier burden to carry than you now think for. Go, and God be with you."

He laid his hand on the Baron's head; Pranken turned away, and full of humility descended the staircase; at the bottom he gave the soldier a brotherly shake of the hand.

After Pranken had gone, the soldier kept looking at his hand, and then searching on the floor; he could not imagine that the free and easy Pranken had not given him a gold piece. No, that would have made a ringing; he must surely have given him paper money; but he could not find it on the clean stone-floor.

As if he had anticipated the soldier's thoughts, Pranken returned, and departed after putting a gold piece into his hand.

He came by Nelly's house, where yesterday — it seemed to him a dream — no, it cannot be! — he had waited an hour. He glanced up, and thought he saw some one leaning at the open window, whose eyes followed him; he fixed his look upon the ground, and passed on.

He came to the parade-ground, listened to the music, saw the officers standing in a group, and — who can calculate the sinuous course of thought? — he thought that the watchword was now being given out to the officers; and he had a watchword too, which no one else was to know, given to him by the man behind the cathedral, who had dashed him down as if he would break every one of his bones. A smile went over Pranken's features.

"Thou hast played well, but thou hast only played," he said, recalling to mind the Dean. "You shall see that I can play well too; I know my part, and I will yet show you a little of my skill in playing."

Pride again rose within him, and he could

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not comprehend that he, Otto von Pranken, had been such a mortified piece of humility. But it is very well to have been so once.

He came to the Hotel Victoria in a half-humble, half-conceited mood, and he now felt a real training-day hunger. Such mental emotions have this advantage, that they make one hungry.

Pranken anticipated with a feeling of satisfaction his dinner with the Baron, his father-in-law.

As he stood at Sonnenkamp's door and was about to ring, he heard some one inside saying in a loud tone:—

"But where's Herr von Pranken?"

"Here!" cried he, as he went in.

CHAPTER VI.

HONOR LIES BLEEDING.

SONNENKAMP's decoration was lying at Pranken's feet as he entered, and the first thing he did was to stoop down and pick it up. Joseph left the room. Pranken balanced the decoration as if it were a heavy weight. Sonnenkamp seemed to be waiting for Pranken to speak first, and when the latter said, "I congratulate you," broke in:—

"No, no—do not. I thank you for coming to me again. I thank you sincerely—very sincerely. You meant well by me."

"What's this? Meant well? I don't comprehend."

Sonnenkamp stared at him; the whole city, the coachmen on the streets knew it, and can this man be ignorant? Does he want to gull him?

"Have you read the Journal?" inquired Sonnenkamp.

"The Journal! No; what's in that?"

Sonnenkamp reached him the paper.

"Here—my diploma of nobility," he said, turning round and looking out of the window while Pranken was reading. He did not want to look at the man's countenance.

There was a long-continued silence in the room, and then Sonnenkamp felt a hand upon his shoulder. He turned round quickly. What's the meaning of this? will the haughty young nobleman have a personal struggle with him?

"Herr Sonnenkamp," said Pranken, "I am a nobleman——"

"I know—I know. Take your hand off of me, you'll soil it."

"And I am your friend," proceeded Pranken calmly. "I cannot approve of what you have done to provoke such a publication."

"Be brief, I've already heard sermonizing enough to-day."

"Herr Sonnenkamp, I always go counter to the public sentiment; I respect you, notwithstanding, and I love your daughter. I am almost glad that I can show you by a sacrifice how my intention——"

"Herr von Pranken, you do not know what you are doing. Your friends, your family——"

"I know the whole. Pooh! the virtuous people may let the stones alone which they would willingly throw at us. Whoever merely winks with the eye shall receive my challenge."

"I admire your courage, but I cannot take advantage of it."

"Not take advantage of it! You have no right to decline it. I am your son as well as Roland; I stand by you, and now it shall be shown who has genuine nobility and bravery. I admire you—but we'll drop this now. Has Roland got back yet?"

"No."

"Then he has gone with the Ensign to the dinner. I will go for him."

Sonnenkamp looked at him in amazement as he drove off; he could not comprehend it. He was now alone again. He mentally accompanied the messengers he had sent round the city, and out to the pleasure-grounds. His thought went out in search of Roland, but did not find him, any more than the messengers did. Roland had gone with the Cabinetsrath's son, as Pranken had conjectured, to the military club-house, where a number of the garrison officers, after the laborious review of the forenoon, had ordered a dinner. There was a great deal of merriment and drinking, and they drank the young American's health. Roland was one of the liveliest among them. There came in a straggling guest, and cried out in the midst of the uproar,—

"Have you heard? The slave-trader has been caught with a paper lasso."

"What's to pay?" was called out.

The new-comer read out of the paper:—

"A proposal, with all due deference, for a coat of arms and a device for the ennobled slave-trader and slave-murderer, James Henry Sonnenkamp, alias Banfield, of Louisiana.

"It would give us peculiar satisfaction to run a parallel between the young nobility in the two hemispheres; to live on the labor of others is their motto; 'thou art born to do nothing,' say the young nobility of the Old as well as of the New World. The Americans have also a superstitious belief that there is some peculiar honor in

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being ennobled. Not because we share in this belief, but rather in order to do something towards removing it, we have written to America for information about a certain Herr Sonnenkamp. We have hitherto been silent, and we should have been silent longer and forever, out of regard for the children of this outcast, for they do not deserve to bear the load of guilt. We are no friends of the nobility: we regard this institution as of the past and as dead; but the nobles are our German fellow-citizens, also, and a part of our nation. As citizens, merely, we have no power to thrust out a man from our community, and we should have felt obliged to let this man alone; but now, we are ready to furnish the evidence that the man who calls himself Sonnenkamp, and lives at Villa Eden, has been one of the most merciless slave-traders and slave-murderers. Then proceed, O German nobles, and ennoble him, — give him a coat-of-arms. The heralds of our editorial office recommend as a device ——"

"Stop!" screamed out the Ensign, for Roland had fallen senseless from his chair.

He was carried out of the room, and restored to consciousness. Fortunately, a carriage now drove up, from which Pranken got out. Roland was lifted into it, and they drove to the hotel.

Shaking with a fever fit, and wrapped up in a soldier's cloak, Roland sat in one corner of the carriage. He would occasionally open his eyes, and then close them again.

Pranken told him that he ought to despise the world, but Roland was silent; once only he heaved a deep sigh and exclaimed, —

"O Eric!"

They reached the hotel. Joseph was waiting before the door. The first word that Roland spoke was a request to be left alone. He went up the steps with Joseph.

"You are to go to your father," said Joseph.

Roland nodded, but when he had gone up-stairs he hastened to his room and locked the door.

Joseph went to Sonnenkamp and told him that Roland had returned.

"He is to come to me," he said.

"He has locked himself in."

"Has he his pistols with him?"

"No, I have them with me."

Sonnenkamp went to Roland's room and knocked; but there was no answer. He begged and entreated Roland to answer him, but Roland made no sound.

"If you do not open immediately, I will shoot myself before your door!" cried Sonnenkamp.

Pranken, who was with him, said: —

"Roland! Roland! will you be guilty of the death of your father?"

"Open! open!" moaned Sonnenkamp before the door.

The bolt was drawn back, and Roland stood rigid, looking at his father, who stretched out his arms toward him; but Roland remained motionless, with lips pressed together, and eyes glaring like one insane.

"My son!" cried Sonnenkamp. "My only son! my beloved son! my child! forgive me! forgive me!"

Roland rushed toward his father, grasped his hand, and wept over it.

"Oh, my child, your tears on my hand! Look, — this wound, this scar, — look, the tears of my child heal it, the tears of my child alone!"

Throwing himself upon Roland's breast, he exclaimed: —

"You, my son, you will not despise your father!"

While he spoke, his heart throbbed violently, and, for the first time in his life, Roland saw his father weep. He embraced him and wept with him.

Father and son then sat opposite each other speechless and motionless, until at last Roland said: —

"Father, there is one way of salvation — only one way of salvation!"

"I am ready, speak, my son."

"I know it, father — I know it! That sublimest One said to the youth, 'Go and give away all that thou hast, and follow me.' And Parker has said that this disgrace must be wiped out; and Benjamin Franklin would say: 'Thou art free, be not a slave to thyself!' Cast all away from you, father, let us be poor — poor! Will you?"

"I thank you, my son," replied Sonnenkamp; he was easier when he saw that Roland had relieved his feelings. "You have a stout heart, a bold spirit, you have noble courage; Herr Eric has taught you well — grand — brave — I thank him — I thank you — that is fine — that is right — the best!"

"Then you agree to it, father?"

"My son, I do not wish to make any pledges — not any; but I promise you, that you shall be satisfied with what I shall do; just in this moment I cannot determine anything."

"No, now; this very moment! it is the grandest, the only moment! It must be done now! After this moment is death, night, damnation, distraction, misery! Oh, father, you must be strong! I will work for you, for my mother, for Manna, for myself!

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And Eric will be with us! I know not what can be done, but it will —— do cast everything away from you!"

"My son, whatever I have of unrighteous possessions, so called, those I will put away. I consider you, my son, no longer in your minority, you are more, you are my brother, you are a man, you are judge of my actions, you are to give your directions — everything with you, through you, out of your pure, your blessed heart, out of your unbroken — yes, your friend Eric, our friend Eric, shall also determine — but let us not come to the final determination at this moment."

And again father and son sat opposite to each other in silence, until Roland began:—

"Father, let us go home to-day."

"No, not to-day. We must both, first of all, get some strength."

Pranken had withdrawn into the adjoining room; he now sent Joseph to say that it was time for dinner. Roland was shocked at the idea of eating anything now; but Sonnenkamp swore that he would not put a morsel into his mouth, although he was almost famishing, if Roland did not sit with them at table, and eat at least a few mouthfuls. Roland yielded.

The Cabinetsrath's place was empty, showing what henceforth would be wanting to their table-enjoyment. Pranken beckoned to Joseph, who understood what he meant and quickly removed the plate.

Sonnenkamp now said that he expected the Cabinetsrath would probably give up the Villa he had received; and Roland now learned how bribery had been employed, and how corrupt and selfish men were. Sonnenkamp took particular notice what an impression this made upon Roland, and a triumphant expression passed over his countenance. It's well so! Roland is to become acquainted with the whole baseness of human beings, to find out that all people are more or less abject, and then what his father has done will gradually seem to him of less account, and be painted in fainter colors.

A choice table was set, but the three ate as if they were at a funeral repast, with the corpse lying in the next room — the mortal remains of worldly honor. Neither gave expression to the feeling which each of them had; they ate and drank, for the body must have nourishment, in order to bear up under this new heart-ache.

Father and son slept in the same chamber, but neither spoke, for neither of them wanted to keep the other from sleep, which would alone wrap them in oblivion.

"Don't give up!" said Sonnenkamp at last, as he fell asleep. Roland slept also, but after an hour he awoke and tossed about restlessly. The darkness seemed to stand like a black wall before him, and he sat up as if in delirium.

To lose one's senses, one's reason — yes, to lose them! they are suddenly gone, you know not when, you know not where; you only know they are not here, and they are no longer in your power. But if you could only find them! Your thoughts are no longer under your own control; they come and go, they combine and disperse according to their own pleasure; and yet you inwardly feel that this will not last, it cannot last; that the time must come when you will once more have the mastery.

"If it were not night! if it were only not night!" groaned Roland to himself, as he awakened in a wandering mood from a short hour's sleep. For the first time in his life, he awoke in the night distressed and sad at heart, with the whole world dark and impenetrable before him.

"Oh, if it were not night! if it only were not night!" he said to himself again. He thought of what Eric's mother had once said: "In the night-time everything is more terrible; day comes, and with the daylight all sufferings, both of the body as well as those of the mind, are less formidable; the eye then looks upon the things of the world, and the sunlight illumines and enlivens everything."

"It will be day again!" he comforted himself at last, and sank away into sleep out of all his brooding fancies.

Early in the morning they started with Pranken for the Villa.

CHAPTER VII.

SICK AT HEART.

The morning air was fresh and cool. Bertram was not on the box of the carriage, but a hired coachman sat next to Lootz. Roland knew the horses, and wanted to take the stranger's place, but Sonnenkamp said in a hoarse voice:—

"No, my child, don't leave me. Sit with me. Stay with me."

Roland obeyed, and took a seat in the close carriage, with his father and Pranken. They drove in silence through the city, each thinking: When, and under what circumstances, will you ever come here again? Roland looked out as they were passing the pleasure-grounds, where in the summer they had excited so much attention at the officers' entertainment. Withered leaves were lying on the tables, and everything was bare and desolate. Sighing and shut-

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ting his eyes, Roland leaned back in the corner of the carriage. The bloom of youth had faded out of his countenance over night, and everything was wilted like a flower touched by the frost.

They drove along, for a time, without speaking. Roland, however, soon heard his father making himself merry over the unadulterated rascality of mankind, and one and another person who were generally spoken of with respect and held in high estimation were spoken of as hardly fit to associate with galley-slaves. A beginning was made with the Cabinetsrath, who had allowed himself to be bribed in such a way, and yet could act as if there had never been anything of the kind. And so, in succession, the good name of everybody was torn into shreds.

Pranken let Sonnenkamp expend his violence and rage, not saying a word even when Clodwig was attacked. What was the use! It is the delight of one suffering under mortification, above all one who is suffering through his own fault, to bring down others to his own level. Roland was deeply troubled, and his heart grew cold at the thought of being able to hold his own position only by being made thoroughly acquainted with, and keeping constantly befor his eyes, the darker side of all human beings.

Tenderly and cautiously, Pranken began to bring into notice the idea that a firm religious belief was the only adequate support, and he openly inveighed against those who would withdraw this support, the only real one, and the highest, from one who relied upon it. Roland knew that Eric was intended, but he did not let it be seen. Pranken went farther, and said that Eric's father, whom mother and son decked out as a demi-god, was a man who at the university had no scholars, and at whom all the learned men had shrugged their shoulders.

Gloomy thoughts, like cloudy forms, thronging in succession, overcast the soul of the youth. One thought prevailed over all others, and allowed him no rest: — Yesterday, honor was everything; to-day, it has no existence. What is honor? It is the seasoning in each particle of life's food, and without it existence is tasteless. This thought startled Roland as if he had seen some terrific vision. He saw the clouds actually before him, in the shape of dense volumes of smoke from Sonnenkamp's cigar. A voice cried out, in mock-merriment, from the midst of the cloud: The people in the whole region round ought to give him a special vote of thanks, for now they were, in comparison with him, snow-white angels, and all that they needed was a pair of wings. All the little men and little woman could say: Lord, I thank thee that I am not like this Sonnenkamp here. "I am truly a godsend to you; thank me, O world!"

This humor pleased Pranken, and he said, laughing, that no one, a year hence, after one had become accustomed to it, would think anything of the present troubles; and he would urgently entreat that not a word should be said about selling the villa and moving away.

Sonnenkamp gave Pranken a nudge, but he had no idea that this communication, although it gave Roland anew the feeling of homelessness, affected him far less than the jeering outburst of his father concerning the thanks due him from the world.

A disintegration of the thoughts and feelings of the youth had taken place, and it was impossible to anticipate what changes might be brought about in these different elements through the introduction of a new agency. A feeling had been awakened within him, that he must bear an indelible stain for his whole lifetime.

The mists dissolved, the day was bright, the sun shone warmly, but Sonnenkamp was chilly, and wrapped himself in his cloak. He sat in the carriage, staring out upon the road, but he saw nothing except the shadow of one of the horses, and this shadow was moving its legs to and fro. Is everything only a shadow in like manner? Is what moves you and draws you onward just such a shadow as this?

A vehicle coming towards them raised a cloud of dust, at which Sonnenkamp stared. Whenever you look at this dust, you feel as if you must be smothered by it; but when you are in the midst of it, turn your face away, and it is not so bad after all. Perhaps what has now happened is just such a whirling cloud of dust. Turn your face away.

He saw the shepherds with their sheep upon the stubble-field, and asked himself: Is that a better life? He wanted to sleep; he threw away his cigar and shut his eyes. It seemed to him as if the carriage were all the time going down hill. But when he opened his eyes, they were on the level road.

Again he shut his eyes, for this was the only way he could be alone.

And now he really went to sleep. Roland gazed in silence out into the bright sunshine. Ah, the sight of nature is helpful only to the joyous, or to one who is beginning to rally from sorrow; she brings no consolation to the heavy laden and the deeply

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saddened spirit; her changelessness, her unsympathizing and steadfast life, seem almost insulting.

Up to this time, Roland had lived in that twilight realm which separates youth from manhood, and now the period of youth was closed. His pride had been turned to shame, but he was mature enough to forget himself soon, and to direct his regards to his father, who is doubly unhappy; unhappy on his own account, and on account of having brought harm upon others — upon those nearest to him.

Sonnenkamp slept; but in his dreamy state between wakefulness and sleep, the rattling carriage-wheels seemed to him the clanking chains of fettered slaves.

He woke suddenly, and stared as if bewildered. Where was he? What had happened? He wrapped himself in his cloak again, and hid his face.

Pranken bent toward Roland, whispering to him: —

"I know how you are inwardly shattered, but there is one cure for you, a grand act, the most sublime deed."

"What is it?"

"Speak lower, don't wake up your father. The one thing for you to do,—it is grand, — the great and noble thing for you is to enter the Papal army; this is the only thing to be done. This is the last, the highest tower to be defended now, and if that falls, the atheists and communists have won the day. I would do it myself, if ——"

"Yes," interrupted Roland, "that would be the thing! We give away all our property to the Holy Father, and he issues a bull in favor of the abolition of slavery."

Sonnenkamp could not keep asleep any longer.

"That's right, my young fellow," he cried. "That's right! the Pope ought to do it. But do you believe that he will do now for money — even were it ten times as much — what he has not done of himself? The idea is a grand one, Herr von Pranken, very grand and very — very shrewd."

There was a little raillery in this commendation, for he thought: You want to get the whole inheritance, and hand over my son to the knife.

"But my dear, noble, high-aspiring young friend," was what he said aloud, "honestly, do you believe that the Pope will do what our Roland expects?"

"No."

They drove on in silence. They saw the Villa in the distance, and on the tower the banner of the American Union was flying, together with the green and yellow flag of the country.

When they came to the green cottage, Roland asked to get out of the carriage, and permission was given.

Roland went into the garden, where a bright voice called to him: —

"Mutual congratulations! we congratulate you, and you should congratulate us, too; we are betrothed."

Lina and the Architect were coming, holding each other's hand, through the meadow from the Villa. Lina left her lover and came up to Roland, saying: —

"We didn't want to wait until the dedication of the castle, we have our celebration by ourselves. Oh, Roland, how beautiful and how happy everything is in the world! But why don't you speak? Why do you make up such a melancholy face?"

Roland could only wave her off, and hurried into the house. The betrothed remained standing in the garden, sorely puzzled, when Lina said: —

"Oh, Albert, there's no good in being here. Nobody welcomed us at the Villa, Manna was not to be seen, Herr Dournay isn't there, and Roland runs away. Come, we'll quit the whole premises. Forgive me for having brought you here before going anywhere else. I thought these were the people to whom I should make known my happiness in the very first place. Come, we'll go to your castle, and spend the whole day for once; you shall be a solitary knight, and I'll be a castle-maiden. Come, I thought there was to be a betrothal here to-day, too; but it doesn't look like it at all, and there's something frightful the matter."

Lina and her betrothed went together to the castle, up through the vineyard, but they were detained at the Major's, who was standing utterly helpless by the garden-hedge.

Such a thing had never happened as took place to-day.

Fräulein Milch had locked herself in her room; she must have met with something very extraordinary.

The Major was perfectly delighted to hear of the betrothal, but he only said: —

"Ah, there might be one down there in the Villa, too; but I'm afraid — I'm afraid we'll hear some bad news from there."

The Major insisted upon the betrothed couple taking a seat in his arbor, saying that Fräulein Milch would soon be down.

The Fräulein was sitting in her chamber alone, for the first time in a sore struggle. The world had been a matter of indifference

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to her, and only of account so far as something could be obtained from it agreeable to the Major. She found the neighborhood very friendly, and she was grateful to the soil, for the Major had a good digestion, and elsewhere he suffered from dyspepsia. She was also grateful to the Rhine, which occasionally furnished a nice fish, and she would nod to the mountains, as if she would say: That's right! just produce good wine; the Major likes to drink it when new, but he mustn't drink too much of it. Thus was the Fräulein kindly disposed towards man and beast, towards water and plants; it was a matter of indifference that nobody troubled himself about her. She had strenuously declined every intimate connection, and now, through the Professorin, she had been drawn more among people, and had to-day been so deeply mortified. She had known Bella for a long time, although very distantly, and she had disliked her for a long time, although very distantly; but what she had experienced to-day was something wholly novel, and it grieved her sorely.

"O," said she to herself, "O, Frau Countess, you are highly virtuous, virtuous in the extreme, most respectfully virtuous, and beautiful too, you are; but I was once young and beautiful, and no one has ever ventured to give me an uncivil word; I have gone through the streets unattended by a servant, I was my own attendant, my own protector, and my own support. O Frau Countess, you stand very far up on the list of rank, I don't know but that you ought to be addressed as Your Highness! O Frau Countess, take care, there is another list of nobility which the Major ought to give you a glimpse of; no, not he; it would mortify him to death; but Herr Dournay, he must do it. No — nobody — only myself."

And just as she had become composed, the Major again knocked, crying: —

"Fräulein Milch! dear good Rosa," he added in a whisper, "Rosie, Rosalie!"

"What do you want?" the Major heard laughingly asked.

"Oh heavens! it's all right now you are laughing again. There are two good people here, the Architect, and Lina the Justice's daughter; they are betrothed, and have come to receive our congratulations. Do come, join us in the garden, and bring right off a bottle and four glasses."

Fräulein Milch opened the door. The Major asked: —

"Mayn't I know what has been the matter with you?"

"You shall know, sure enough, but don't ask me any more now. So the young people are betrothed, and at the house? I must dress myself up a little, and I'll come down immediately."

"So do. That's nice."

Fräulein Milch was delivered from all her own trouble, when the duty was enjoined upon her of rejoicing with the joyful; and the betrothed couple forgot the castle, and remained for hours sitting with the Major and Fräulein Milch in the arbor.

Then the journal came, and the Major begged to be excused for reading it before his guests; he received the paper after the burgomaster, the school-master, and the barber had read it, and so he could keep it. As he had nothing more to do with the world, it made no difference whether he learned an hour or two sooner or later what had happened.

"Oh, here's a great black mark," exclaimed Lina.

"That's the burgomaster's mark," said the Major. "Fräulein Milch, would you read to me? There must be something very special."

The Fräulein took the paper, but she covered her face with her hand after she had looked into it.

"What's the matter? You read, dear Lina."

Lina read the bitter paragraph by Professor Crutius; she wanted to stop after the first few lines, but the Major begged:

"Read on; do read on."

She read on to the end.

"O Thou really good Builder of all the worlds, what queer material you've put into the construction of the world! Good heavens! there's something frightful about a newspaper; now everybody knows about this."

Fräulein Milch was just on the point of saying that this was no news to her, but she had the self-command, doubly difficult for a woman, to keep from telling what she knew. It was better to say nothing, as she would thus escape a long explanation to the Major why she had said nothing about it a long time ago. Not till the Major begged her to go to the Professorin, who would be greatly troubled by this communication, did she say: —

"The Professorin, as well as I, knew it a long time ago."

In his bewilderment, the Major did not ask how it happened that she knew; he only opened his eyes wider. He had said to her a great many good and kind things, but the best of all was when he observed: —

"Yes. You might belong to our Brotherhood, you can keep a secret."

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After a while the Major continued: —

"Look, children, down below there is the wonderfully beautiful Villa with its parks, its gardens, and with its millions inside the house — ha! and Roland and Manna. Fräulein Milch, don't try to prevent me. I must go down there, for nobody knows what's going on there, and I must do something to help them. Don't say anything against it, Fräulein Milch, I entreat you."

"I haven't said anything to hinder you; on the contrary, I think you ought to go."

Before she had finished speaking, a messenger came from the Villa for the Major to go there.

Lina wanted to join him, thinking she might be of some assistance to Manna; but the Major said that the Professorin and Aunt Claudine were enough already, and Lina ought not to spoil now any of her happiness.

Just as the Major was about to set off, a voice cried: —

"Herr Major, just stop. I'm coming."

With flushed face, and out of breath, Knopf came up.

"Do you know it?" asked the Major.

"Yes, indeed, and that's the reason I've come. Perhaps I can do something at the Villa."

"Good! I'm going, so come with me. No, you stay here, stay with the Fräulein. I'll have you sent for if you're needed."

And so the Major walked down the mountain, and the four who remained followed him with affectionate looks.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE TRIUMPH OF THE OPPRESSED.

ROLAND entered the cottage, and found the Professorin, Eric, and Manna in grave conversation together; they had imparted the dreadful secret to each other, and what weighed the most heavily upon them was the thought how Roland would bear it when he should learn of it. He now came in and said: —

"Manna, we are disgraced children!"

The three hastened to him, and affectionately embraced and kissed him.

"Be strong, brother!" said Eric, throwing his arms around him. "I can blow you strong, my brother."

Hiawatha's saying echoed in Roland's soul, and he looked around on all sides, as if bewildered. He sat down speechless on a chair, and the three dear to him sat in silence near him.

Sonnenkamp, meanwhile, had got out at the entrance of the park, and walked towards the villa; it seemed to him as if the ground would give way under his feet, and the house and trees vanish. Are you sick? he asked himself. You are not to be sick! He whistled softly to himself; his gigantic strength still held out.

Here everything is as it was, and you yourself are here, too, he said, exerting a powerful control over himself, as he stood upon his property and grounds. He seemed to be wrestling with a hostile world enlisted against him, and he repelled the encompassing foes with heroic strength; they should not cut off the sources of his confidence and power. He felt himself well armed and equipped. Pranken is right; one must not let himself be cowed, one must bid defiance to the world, and then it will bow itself in humility, and in a year — no, much sooner, all will come and flatter him.

He remained standing on the steps, holding on by the railing, for all his strength seemed exhausted; but drawing a deep breath, and plucking up his courage, as it were, he soon recovered his self-possession. He looked about without constraint, he had become so accustomed to feigning, that he was determined no one should see in him any trace of disturbance.

He went up the steps with a firm and steady stride. He took Pranken's arm, and told him in a candid tone how highly he esteemed him and admired his strength, of which he already felt the effect in himself.

He went with Pranken to his room, nodding to everything which still held its place here, and should hold it firmly for the time to come. He requested his son — so he called Pranken — his son, of whom he was proud, to impart what had happened to Frau Ceres, the very first thing, in his quiet and self-possessed, his easy, his all-subduing manner that he so much admired.

"Make no reply if she storms. This stormy outburst is no longer formidable."

In this declaration there was a sort of tranquillizing influence which Sonnenkamp himself felt. It is better that the whole world should stand up in arms against him, than to be forever and forever under the dominion of this crafty, threatening, and annoying woman. Now her weapon was gone, and the dagger which she had always kept hidden was now unsheathed in the eyes of all the world, and was in every hand.

Pranken went to Frau Ceres; he had to wait a long time in the ante-room, but at last Fräulein Perini came out.

Pranken briefly told her that the secret she had confided to him, and which he had kept so faithfully, was now made public.

"So soon?" said Fräulein Perini; and

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when Pranken inquired how Frau Ceres would be likely to receive the annihilation of her hopes of being ennobled, and the whole detestable uproar in the world, she replied, smiling, that she could not tell, for Frau Ceres was now suffering under a terrible trial of a wholly different kind.

She could hardly go on, she was so choked with laughter, but finally it came out.

Yesterday morning, Frau Ceres in some incomprehensible way had broken off her most beautiful nail, a real prodigy of most careful cherishing, and she was utterly inconsolable.

Pranken could not help joining in the laugh. He accompanied Fräulein Perini into the room.

Frau Ceres gave him her left hand to kiss, holding the right carefully concealed. She asked whether Pranken had brought with him the armorial device, and pointed to an embroidery frame on which she wanted at once to work the coat-of-arms, and also to an altar-cloth, whose border was already completed.

Pranken now broke the news to her in a very careful manner.

"And he always said I was stupid! I am cleverer than he," Frau Ceres burst out; "I always told him that Europe was no place for us, and that we ought to have remained where we were. Hasn't he caught it now? He's ashamed to come himself, and so he has sent you. He's ashamed, because I, the simpleton, who had never learned anything, knew the affair so much better than he did."

In this first moment, a mischievous joy seemed to be Frau Ceres' predominant feeling; the man who had always treated her as a feeble plaything must now see that her ideas were more correct than his.

She sat long in silence, moving her lips, and with a scornful, exultant expression, as if she were uttering to her husband all her present thoughts. Pranken thought it incumbent on him to add, that in a short time the family would be as much respected as before.

"Do you believe that we shall be ennobled then?"

Pranken was perplexed what reply to make, for it seemed as if the woman did not yet comprehend what had happened. He evaded a direct answer, and only said that he remained true to the family, and regarded himself as a son of the house.

"Yes, to-morrow ought to be the wedding. Here in Europe, you have so many formalities. I'll drive to church with you. But where's Manna? She has horribly neglected me."

"But, my dear Baron, it is well, this connection with the tutor's family will now come to an end. Don't let it continue any longer, dear Baron."

She requested Fräulein Perini to tell Manna to come to her.

Pranken could not comprehend how this woman, half childish, half cunning, sometimes malicious, sometimes peevish, could be also sometimes so affectionate; but there was no time now to try to solve the riddle. He besought the Mother — such was the appellation he now gave to Frau Ceres — to leave Manna alone for a few days; he would first see her alone, and then they would come together to the mother and ask her blessing.

"I give you my blessing now," said Frau Ceres, forgetting herself so far as to give him both hands.

She told him that Bella had been there, and had hardly shown herself to her; that she had come, and then had driven away again in a manner that she couldn't comprehend at all.

Here a shot was heard.

"He has shot himself; he has done it now!" cried Frau Ceres, in a singular tone; it was not lamentation, nor laughter, but something peculiar, utterly inexplicable.

Pranken hurried away.

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CHAPTER IX.

THE HAND-WRITING ON THE WALL.

SONNENKAMP had seated himself in his room, and the letter-bag lay before him, but he did not open it. What matters it what the outside world desired! One thought was uppermost, that he must do something, something startling, something that would shatter the whole world to pieces. What? He did not yet know. He sat speechless in the midst of the fairest landscape, with the windows darkened, as in a cellar.

No, not harm thyself, that wouldn't do! anything but weakness, cried he to himself. Why be afraid of this old sentimental spinster, Europe, with her fine modes of speech! What hast thou done? Thou hast acted with due reflection, and thou standest by what thou hast done. It is well that there's nothing more to conceal, that everything is known.

He rose and went into the park. From a lofty acacia-tree one of the main branches was hanging down, which had been broken, so that the tree was like a bird that had lost one of its wings. The head-gardener told Sonnenkamp that a gust of wind had swept over the park the night before. Sonnenkamp nodded several times as he looked at the tree, and then indulged in his inaudible whistle.

A gust of wind may break down a tree like this, but a man like him stands firm.

He went farther on, and coming to the fruit-garden, saw the splendid show of fruit upon the trees; glass bell-shaped vessels, filled with water, were hung by wires underneath the different fruits, so that they might be continually supplied with moisture, and be made to grow. All this you can effect; you can direct nature, why not man? why not destiny? He gazed at the huge fruits as if they could give him an answer, but they remained dumb. He stood for a long time before one tree, that had been trained to the shape of a coronet, and stared at the branches.

In a spider's-web stretched between two twigs a fly was struggling—whew! how convulsively it struggled! perhaps it moaned also, but we couldn't hear it. Yes, high and noble fly, you have a fate no different from that of the human fly. Everywhere spiders—yes, spiders! And you are better off, you will be speedily eaten.

Sonnenkamp struck his forehead with his clenched fist: he was angry with his brain, that led him into such subtile speculations.

He turned away and went back to his room. The best thing you can do, he said to himself, is to make a speedy exit; then are your children free, and you are free too. He took a revolver from the wall just as some one knocked at the door.

"What's the matter? what do you want?" A groom gave his name, and Sonnenkamp opened the door. The groom informed him that his black horse rattled in the throat and foamed at the mouth; that he was sick, and they could not tell what ailed him.

"Indeed?" cried Sonnenkamp. "Have you not walked the horse out for exercise? Has any one ridden him?"

"Yes; the Herr Captain ordered the horse to be saddled the night before, and was a long time gone with him."

"So! Come, I'll cure him speedily." He went down to the stable, looked grimly at the horse, and then shot him through the head. The horse gave one hoarse rattle, and fell headlong.

"So! it's all over now! cried Sonnenkamp. "Now you are free!"

As he was leaving the stable, Pranken came up.

"What have you done?"

"Pooh! I've shot a horse, and every one who doesn't mind," he said in a loud tone, so that all the servants might hear, "knows what to expect."

He ordered the groom to saddle another horse.

Joseph came with the inquiry from Frau Ceres as to what had happened.

Sonnenkamp sent word to Frau Ceres that he had shot the black horse. He smiled when he heard Pranken's report of his wife's state of feeling; he avoided going to her, and he experienced a sort of grateful joy towards destiny, that the large house rendered it possible for each of the inmates to live by himself.

He went to see the Professorin; it was hard for him to meet her eye and that of Eric, but it must be done; he must arm himself to look all men boldly in the face. Was he a coward? had he not bid defiance to the world, and was he now to be afraid of this tutor's family?

He entered the green cottage. He extended his hand neither to Eric nor his mother, and only asked where the children were. He received the answer that they had locked themselves in the library.

He said in a light way to Eric and his mother that he had been especially desirous for them to know the whole; it would now be seen who was faithful. Turning to Eric, he said:—

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"I have shot the black horse, which you rode last night. What is mine is mine."

He went quietly away; he stood some time near the library door, and heard Roland and Manna talking, but without distinguishing a word.

He knocked twice, but there was no answer. and he turned away. Returning to the villa, and mounting a horse, he rode to the Cabinetsrath's villa, for he wished to give these people a piece of his mind. And as he was riding along, it seemed to him as if the groom behind him suddenly reined up, and then as if there were two following him. Who is this unknown companion? He forced himself not to look round. The horse trembled under the pressure of his legs. He reached the country-house of the Cabinetsrath, stopped at the gate, and asked after the minister's wife.

The gardener said that she was not there, and that she would not be there any more.

What does this mean? He laughed aloud when he was informed that the villa, with all its appurtenances, had been sold the day before to the American consul at the capital. He is outwitted; these people are his neighbors no longer, and there can nothing be said about demanding back the property bought at a merely nominal sum. And after the first flush of anger, Sonnenkamp experienced a peculiar satisfaction in the thought that there were so many sagacious people in the world; it is a pleasant thing that there are so many foxes and lynxes to be found everywhere, and under their own particular masks.

A court-lackey rode up. Sonnenkamp reined in. Could it be possible that they repented and were sending a courier after him?

"Where are you going?" he asked of the court-lackey as he stopped.

"To Villa Eden."

"To whom?"

"To the Professorin Dournay."

"Might I ask who sends you, and what your errand is?"

"Why not?"

"Well, what's the errand?"

"The Professorin was formerly a lady in waiting on the gracious mother of the Prince, and the gracious Princess was very fond of her."

"Very well, very well. And now?"

"Well, now, the Professorin is living there with a horrible man who has deceived the whole world, and is a slavetrader, and one's life isn't safe there a single minute, and now the gracious Princess sends me there, and I am to say to the Professorin — and if she will, to take her along with me at once — that she can be delivered from this monster."

The lackey was astonished to see the man who had questioned him ride away without speaking another word.

Sonnenkamp boiled with rage; but he shortly laughed out loud again.

"That's all right! afraid, — the whole world is afraid of him. This confers strength; this is far better than the silly honor, with which one must behave himself."

He felt a profound contempt for those in high station. Now they take up the neglected widow, now, — why not before?

He rode to the castle. Here were the laborers who were erecting a wing of the building; they saluted their employer with evident reluctance. Sonnenkamp smiled; at any rate, they had to salute him. He would have liked to get the whole world together, in order to look it, once for all, defiantly in the face.

He rode to the Major's. Fräulein Milch was standing at the window, and before he said anything, she called down: —

"The Herr Major is not at home." And now he turned homeward.

When he came to the garden-wall, he noticed some large letters, and riding nearer, he saw written in many different ways: Slave-trader! Slave-murderer! An artist, with no very practised hand, had drawn the picture of a gallows on which a figure was hanging with protruding tongue, and on the tongue was the word Slave-trader! He ordered the porter to keep better watch, and to shoot down the insolent fellows who should do any such thing.

The porter said: —

"I'll not shoot; I shall leave the service on St. Martin's day, anyhow."

Sonnenkamp rode back toward the green cottage; he wanted to take away his children, and he wanted to tell the Professorin not to give any more charity to the rabble that dared to write such words on the white wall of his garden. But he turned about again. The best way would be to take no notice of it.

Panting with rage he returned to his room, and he wondered at the thought which came over him, that this house was his own no longer; every one in the neighborhood was thronging in, scoffing, pitying, and he was living, as it were, in the street, for every one was speaking about him, and he could not help himself. He stamped his foot on the floor.

"Here 'tis! You wanted honor, — you

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wanted to be talked about, and now they do talk, — but how? I despise the whole of you!" he exclaimed.

He turned over all manner of plans in his mind, how he should get the better of the world. But what was there that he could do? He could not hit upon anything.

CHAPTER X.

ROLAND'S MOAN.

ROLAND and Manna sat in the library, holding each other's hand; they were like two children who had taken refuge from the storm in a strange hut. For a long time they were unable to speak. Manna was the first to gain composure, and in a tone of forced cheerfulness, passing her hand over her brother's face, she said: —

"Do you know the story of the little brother and the little sister? They lost themselves in the wood, and then found their way home again. And we are like two children in the wild forest. But we are children no longer; you are grown up, you are strong, you must be so."

"Oh, don't speak," replied Roland, "every word goes through my brain, even the sound of your voice. O sister! no, there's none like it! Do you think in all these hundreds and hundreds of books there's one single fate like ours? No, there can't be."

After a longer interval, Manna again began: —

"Now I can tell you what I meant, when I said that I would be an Iphigenia; I wanted to sacrifice myself for you all, in order to take the expiation from you."

"Oh, don't speak. What do these stories of the children in the wood, of Orestes and Iphigenia, have to do with us? Orestes was happy, he could consult the gods at Delphi; at that time the gods could be offended and appeased; they were obliged to give a response — but now? we? Where, in these times, is there a single mouth which gives a response in the name of the gods? The Greeks had slaves too; and we? Now they tell us that love has come into the world, and that all men are the children of God! Is this love? And the priests blessed the marriage of a man who held slaves — children of God as slaves, — and they baptized these children, letting them still be slaves! Alas! I'm getting crazed! O, my youth! O, my youth! Alas! I am still so young, and I must bear for a long, long life-time — must bear this — everything! There's a blackness before my eyes, a spot upon everything I see — all is black — black! At the time when Claus was imprisoned — Children do not suffer for the crime of their father; they can have no part in it, but they do suffer from it a whole life-time. Where is justice — help me, sister! — do help me!"

"I cannot, I do not comprehend it! O, it was that drove me out of the sanctuary! I don't comprehend it!"

The brother and sister sat together in silence, until Roland suddenly threw himself into Manna's arms, and hiding his head on her bosom, said: —

"Manna, I wanted to kill myself, I could not bear it. Yesterday, everything so beautiful — and here on your heart I cry — I must live — I don't know what I am to do — I must live! Were the children to kill themselves for their parent's guilt, that guilt would be made still greater."

Again Roland leaned his head on the arm of the sofa, murmuring to himself: —

"He did not carry it out at once, and now it will never be done."

"What do you mean?" asked Manna. Roland gave her a glassy stare, but he kept it to himself that he had exhorted his father to put away all his property, and that the father had led him to believe it should be done; but now he seemed to see clearly that nothing of the kind would ever take place. He closed his eyes, opened them again, and lay there paralyzed as in an awful void, everything crushed and shattered within him.

Manna understood how he felt, and kneeling by the sofa, she cried: —

"Roland, I have a great secret to tell you; Eric and I —— "

"What?" exclaimed Roland, sitting upright.

"Eric and I are betrothed."

"You? you two?"

He sprang up, pressed her in his arms, exclaiming again: —

"You? you two?"

"Yes, Roland; and he has known everything for a long time."

"He has known everything? And he has not rejected you with disdain? — and he has instructed me so faithfully? — Oh!"

Roland and Manna held each other in a long embrace. There was a knock at the door, and they separated, looking at each other in dismay. They knew it was their father's knock, but neither of them said so. There was another rap, and they still were silent. Retreating footsteps were heard, and they knew their father's step. Both knew what it meant not to open when their father knocked, but each refrained from speaking of it.

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Roland's thoughts must have gone from one person to the other, for he now said:—

"Herr von Pranken has advised me to enter the Papal army. O, if I only knew a battle-field where human brotherhood was to be fought for! O, if I knew where that was, how gladly would I die on it! But that cannot be won upon the field of battle. Oh, sister! I don't know what I'm thinking, what I'm saying. Hiawatha fasted, and we must fast too."

"Let us go home!" said Manna, finally.

"Home! home! What is home to us? What can be our home?"

Roland, however, rose up and went hand in hand with Manna through the meadow to the villa.

The sun shone bright, the hay exhaled so sweet a fragrance, the vessels were rushing up and down the stream, and just then a merry procession was moving towards them on the road; it was a so-called harvest mummery. On a cask sat the second son of the Huntsman crowned as Bacchus with vine-leaves; around him stood maidens clad in white, with dishevelled hair; they were swinging jugs, shouting and rejoicing. On the horses rode shapes disguised with moss.

Everybody was shouting and screaming amidst the loud report of fire-arms.

Brother and sister stood and gazed after the merry train, which disappeared behind the trees, and each knew the other's thoughts. Yes, all others can be merry, but we! They went on farther, and at last Roland said:—

"I know not how it is with me, I feel as if I were not really experiencing all this; I am only dreaming of it, and looking at it like a departed spirit. Everything is so distant, so inaccessible, so dim, so shadowy. When I look upon you, I feel all the time that we cannot approach each other at all, that there lies between us a dreadful immensity of distance, and father — mother!"

With a wild stare he looked around him, as if he saw ghosts everywhere. Manna held his hand more firmly; he became more tranquil; nay, he even smiled thankfully.

Griffin came bounding along just at this moment; he was overjoyed to see his young master once more, and jumped up on him again and again. Roland caressed him and said:—

"Yes, dear Griffin, when I had lost and forgotten you, then you found your way home. Ah, dear Griffin, don't you know a way home for me now? I am not your master, I am nothing."

The dog seemed to understand Roland's sad looks and words; he looked up at him so affectionately, as if he wanted to say:—Ah! do not pine thy young life away.

Brother and sister stood side by side on the bank of the Rhine. Roland exclaimed,—

"I see my face in the water, sister, there is no brand upon my forehead — no brand — and still ——"

He wept bitterly, for the first time.

"Come, let us go on," said Manna consolingly.

"On, on! Yes, our path is long, unendingly long," rejoined Roland, as he allowed himself to be led away by his sister.

They entered the courtyard of the villa. The servants were slowly leading away the horses with their blankets on.

Roland opened his mouth: he wanted to cry out: Take off the blankets! Take off the blankets, and hide the shame with them! Let the horses all spring out into the open air. We have no more right over them, they are no longer ours! But he could not utter the words.

Then he looked up at the green-houses, at the trees, as if he wanted to ask them all if they knew to whom they belonged.

He asked Manna to go into the stable with him. He looked into the servants' faces as if begging respect from them, and he thanked them for saluting him, and for asking him what his commands were. Men still saluted him, men still obeyed him! In the stable, he caressed his pony and wept upon his neck.

"O Puck! shall you ever carry such a light-hearted youth again?"

The dogs were jumping round him; he nodded to them, and said sorrowfully to Manna:—

"The brutes are altogether the happiest creatures in the world; they inherit nothing from their parents, nothing but life — no house, no garden, no money, no clothes. Ah, my good Puck, what a fine long mane you have!"

There was something rising almost to frenzy in Roland's thought and speech, as, tugging at the beast's long mane, he exclaimed:—

"If slaves could not speak, could not pray, they would be happy like you, and like you, my faithful dogs!"

Manna was becoming uneasy at the unwearying tenor of Roland's thoughts; she said:—

"You must now remain all the time with our friend Eric, and not leave him a moment."

"No, not now — not now! Those are no arrows of Apollo, for the pedagogue to ward off!"

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Manna did not understand what Roland was saying; his mind seemed to her distracted, and he did not explain how it was that the Niobe group rose before his eyes. At length, after some time, he said: —

"Yes, so it is! The maiden hides in her mother's lap, but the boy holds up his own hands and wards off the fatal shaft. And at night, when I was wandering off to Eric, I listened to the story of the laughing sprite. It takes a long while for an acorn to grow into a tree, and a cradle to be made out of the tree, and a child that lies in the cradle to open the door. Don't you hear? he laughs; he must go through his transformation."

Manna begged him to be quiet, and said: —

"I must go to father."

"And I to mother."

Pranken met them on the steps; he held out his hand to Manna, and she said:

"I am unspeakably thankful to you for the great loyalty you have shown to my father."

"Stop a while, I beg of you."

"No, I cannot now — no longer."

The brother and sister separated, and as Roland entered his mother's room, the latter said: —

"Don't trouble yourself about this Old World, we are going back again to the New, to your real home."

Roland caught these words as if they came from afar off; and he exclaimed: —

"That's it! that's it! It is the Delphic oracle!"

"What do you say? I am not learned."

Roland did not answer. Something was beginning to emerge out of the chaos around him, but it sank quickly out of sight again.

"Wait a moment, it is time to go to dinner," said the mother.

She put on a shawl and went with Roland to the dining-room.

Here, also, were Pranken and Fräulein Perini; the two were standing talking together in a low tone.

Roland went for Eric.

"Isn't it dreadful to have to eat again?" he said. "What bits of slaves do we eat to-day? Ah, Eric! lay your hand upon my forehead. So — so — now that's good."

They had to wait some time before Sonnenkamp came, and Manna did not appear until some time afterwards.

Her cheeks were glowing.

They sat there at table so near together, and so far — far apart were they from each other. Eric and Manna looked at each other only once; there was in their glance an expression full of intelligence. Roland said softly to Eric, —

"When the huntsman came home from court there were potatoes on his table."

Eric laid his hand consolingly on his shoulder; he knew everything that was going on in the soul of the youth from this reminiscence. The huntsman was innocent, and here?

Pranken displayed all his tact in managing to bring forward every safe subject of conversation; the building of the castle furnished him abundant material.

They rose from the table, and all separated as before. Roland requested Eric to allow him to remain alone by himself for that day.

CHAPTER XI.

THE BOND OF HONOR.

It was evening. Roland was going through the village. In the streets floated an odor of the May wine; everybody was merry and bustling; the wine-presses were creaking and dripping in the streets, men were moving along slowly with full heavy tubs on their backs.

Roland gazed at everybody with questioning look; he would have liked to cry out, —

See, here is a beggar, he begs of you something of love, of kindness, of pity for him and his father. Ah, only a little charity!

He saw the houses to which on his birthday he had carried joy-bringing gifts; the people returned his greetings, but they were not, as formerly, gladdened and honored by them; he left the village.

Outside of it, on the river-bank, he sat behind a hedge, as he did before he ran away to Eric. Now he was sitting in unspeakable sadness, that bade fair to wither his life-strength. A water-ousel flew up near him. With childish self-forgetfulness, he bent the boughs away from each other, and saw a nest with five young ones stretching out their bills. How happy he would have been in by-gone days to have made such a discovery! Now, he stood there, and said to himself sadly, —

Ah! you are at home.

He heard a carriage come rattling towards him on the road, and he thought of that poor servant in the night, who would rather hunger and beg than possess property unjustly acquired.

Not far from him on the bank a boat was loosened from its chain; he heard the chain rattle, and at the same moment he felt in his heart as if he heard the slaves, who, bound in one long chain, were coming towards him; and this again transformed

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itself in his imagination, and he saw the dwarf, fettered as he had once seen him, and the groom; they were walking along the road, and behind them the constable, with his loaded gun gleaming in the sun.

He looked up.

There, indeed, was a constable walking along. What if he were coming to arrest his father?

O no, there was no fear of that!

What was the matter, then?

And while his eye was still fastened on the bush behind which the constable disappeared, he became, as it were, clairvoyant, his sight reaching out to all things instinctively. His thought stretched away to Clodwig, to the Doctor, to the Major, to the Huntsman. What are they all saying? Profoundly it came upon him: Man does not live for himself alone. There is an invisible and inseparable community, whose bond is respect and honor. He could bear no longer to sit alone with his confused thoughts; he said to himself almost aloud:—

"To the Huntsman's."

With nimble foot and beating heart, as if he expected to find something there, he knew not what, he ascended the mountain. Before reaching the town he was met by the second son of the Huntsman; he too was slowly plodding: he was carrying a heavy tub of young wine. The lad was of the same age with Roland, and while still at some distance, he cried out:—

"Father said that you would come. Just go right in, he is expecting you."

Roland thanked him and went on. As he entered the Huntsman's house, the latter cried out to him:—

"Knew you were coming. Have a salve for you. Needn't tell me anything, know everything this long while. Can give you something."

"What?"

"Boy, there are two things in the world that help; praying and drinking. If you can't pray, drink till you have enough. Come, that's the best thing."

"Shame on you," rejoined Roland, "shame on you, there is another thing."

"What now? What?"

"Why, thinking. I cannot yet do it well at all, and I know not what will come of it, but still help must come of it."

"Huzza!" cried the Huntsman, "you're a splendid lad! Say, have you decided yet what you'll do with the big pile of money, when you've once got it in your hand?"

"No."

"Very well. No doubt you'll learn. Now, I tell you, don't fret your young life away. Have pity on your father; he is a poor man, with all his millions. Show that you're a lad who deserves to have the sun shine on him.

"Listen! mind!" he said, interrupting himself suddenly.

The black-bird was singing the melody: "Rejoice in your life." Roland and the Huntsman looked at each other, and Roland smiled.

"Just so!" cried the Huntsman. "Learn that by heart, too. Rejoice in your life, all else is silly stuff. The bird is sensible. You've done your part well." He nodded to the black-bird, which was regarding the man and the boy with a wise look, as if it knew what it had done, and was sure of applause; and turning to Roland, he continued merrily:—

"So—just so!—just so! Hold up your head, and if you need any one, call on me. You got me out of prison; that I'll never forget. Now come and be merry, as your dogs are."

He took out a loaf of bread, which Roland was to give to the dogs to eat; but Roland ate first with great zest.

"Hurrah! victory!" shouted Claus, "you're hungry. The battle's won! Now let the water run down the Rhine, there's another day to-morrow."

Eric had had a presentiment that Roland would be at the field-guard's; he went after him, and was rejoiced to find him calm once more. They went home together, and Roland said:—

"Over there at the Huntsman's it came into my head all at once: What would Benjamin Franklin say to me now? Do you know, Eric, what he would say?"

"Not entirely, but I think he would say that a man who does nothing but grieve stands on a level with the brute, which in a mishap cannot help itself. The power of man has its beginning in this, that he can grasp, comprehend, and direct his misfortune in such a way as to make something out of it for his own good. If you suffer yourself to fall asleep in affliction, you are responsible for your own injury. Rouse yourself. As long as there is anything which you can esteem in yourself, you have a right to the esteem of others."

"Thanks," exclaimed Roland. "For my part, I have been thinking what Benjamin Franklin would say. I saw him before me with his genial countenance, his long snow-white hair, and he said:—Mark you, the worst thing is not what shames us in the eyes of the world, but to allow the shame so to pervert your mind that you look upon all men as base."

What he had listened to on the way he

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had shaped into a strong pillar of thought for himself.

Eric could not tell how it gladdened his heart to feel that he had fashioned this youth for such things; he wanted to cry out to him, You are a man; but he repressed it. It would not do to say it aloud. With a tranquillity wrung from the most profound grief, they both returned to the villa.

They reached the garden wall, from the face of which the porter was scraping something.

"There it is! there it is!" exclaimed Roland. "I have read it!"

The porter was scraping the mortar with a sharp iron, and this scraping went through Roland's soul as if the work were done on his own heart. All the coolness and composure that he had gained disappeared.

"There it is!" he exclaimed. "It will have to be scraped off again to-morrow, and the day after to-morrow, and forever. Ah, Eric, why are men so wicked! What good does it do them to insult us?"

Eric consoled him by saying that men are not so wicked, they merely liked to irritate and mock one another.

He accompanied Roland to his room, and there the youth sat still, his hand clenched and pressed against his lip, till his teeth left their mark on his fingers. For a long while he spoke not a word. He looked at the stuffed bird, and said softly to himself once more, "Hiawatha!"

He stood at the window, and looked down into the park, up into the sky, where the swallows were gathering in great flocks, getting ready to cross the sea into warmer lands. Everything, everything has its home, something was saying in the heart of this youth; the plant that cannot stir is carried to a secure shelter, and the swallow draws to a place where it can still be happy. O, if some one could only tell us now where we might be happy!

All at once he shrank back from the window, for he saw the Russian prince entering the courtyard; behind the Prince came the Doctor in his carriage. Roland begged Eric to leave him alone, and not bring any one to see him.

Eric went away, and Roland locked himself up in his room.

CHAPTER XII.

SONNENKAMP FINDS A CONGENIAL SPIRIT.

SONNENKAMP was sitting alone in his large room; he looked up towards the castle, which was nearly completed. Who will dwell in it? He turned his eye away. He stood for a long time in front of Roland's picture.

"One should have no children, know nothing of them," he exclaimed. He was terrified at the sound of his own voice.

He opened the money-safe; he contemplated the neatly-arranged papers, and the drawers that contained the coined and uncoined gold.

"What help are you to me? and still ——"

There was a knock at the door.

"Who is it?" he asked.

Joseph answered: —

"His Highness the Prince is here, and wishes ——"

The Prince? Could it be possible? Was it all only a dream? Is the Prince coming to ask his pardon? Does he feel ——?

Sonnenkamp went to the door; he opened it; there stood the Russian Prince Valerian. He said, with friendly words, that he had come to see if he could, in any way, be of assistance, and Herr Weidmann also ——

"I need no assistance! I need no one," broke in Sonnenkamp, shutting the door and locking it once more.

"I have no pity, and want no pity," said he to himself, holding both his clenched hands on his breast. There was another knock.

"What is it? Why don't they leave me in peace?"

Through the key-hole came the sound of a gentle voice: —

"It is I, the Countess Bella."

Sonnenkamp shivered.

Is it a trick? It is some one who insists on speaking to him, assuming that name and that voice.

Well! At any rate, the person who puts on that mask is very cunning. Let us see who it is that is so shrewd!

He opened the door and stood transfixed; it was indeed Bella.

"Give me your hand!" she cried. "Your hand! You are a hero, I have never before seen a hero. And what are all these puppets around you? Stuffing for uniforms, nothing more; cowardly professors and newspaper hacks! There is still a bugbear which they call humanity, of which they are all in fear; before which they creep away, like children from the wolf. You alone are a man!"

"Sit down," at last said Sonnenkamp in astonishment; he did not in the least understand what all this could mean. Bella kept up the same strain, saying:—

"I knew that you were a conqueror, but I did not know that you were such a mighty one."

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Still Sonnenkamp was not able to understand. What does this woman want? Is this a kind of mockery? But he was disposed to think otherwise, when she exclaimed: —

"They are weaklings — cowards, all of them, the world of rank particularly! They ought to have created you a count, an ordinary baron is altogether too small a thing for you. You have done what they all would have liked to do — no, not all, but only certain ones who have the mettle within them. But they are ashamed before the man who accomplishes what they had not the energy, or the courage, or the daring to accomplish. They have swords, they carry fancy daggers, and are frightened at the rattan of the school-master, who raps them on the fingers with it and says to them: 'Know ye not that we are living in the epoch — or do they call it the century, the age — of humanity?' By good right, all the nobles of the land should leave their cards for you, and congratulate you. How many of these puppets would be in possession of nobility, if they had to win it by heroism like yours? Look at me; were I young, had you come in my youth, I would have gone out with you into the wide world; you have in you a Napoleonic vein. Give me your hand!"

She reached out both her hands and pressed his passionately.

"You do not recollect, but I have kept it in mind," said she in a haughty tone, "when you and Prince Valerian dined with us, you said: 'There is a priestcraft of Humanity.' You were right. Before the flimsy humanity of Jean Jacques Rousseau, they all bow down in fear, strong free men; they are dreaming of a paradise of equality, where black and white, noble and mean, the genius and the blockhead, shall be brewed into a mass together; they have a new faith in a book, the 'Contrat Social' is their Bible. I am not afraid of Jean Jacques Rousseau ——"

With a joyful look, Sonnenkamp interrupted her: —

"A cause is not lost, no, it is victorious, if highminded women are enthusiastic over it."

"Thanks — thanks," continued Bella.

She seized his hand and stroked his thumb with her delicate fingers.

"So one of the pets of the school-masters has sunk his teeth in here? Be proud of it; it is a mark of honor, more so than if it had been won in battle. Now let nothing in the world subdue you; enjoy yourself; you have nothing more to conceal; now stand your ground and show that you are the only one that is not afraid of the school-masters. The dauntless man acknowledges and conforms to the inevitable."

Bella had risen; her eye was blazing, her cheeks were glowing, and her countenance wore a look of mysterious and terrible fascination.

So must Medusa have appeared, so must she have breathed, so must she have trembled.

And in the midst of this deep emotion, Bella felt that it was a fine scene: here are the sublime tones of voice at her command, here is majesty, here is passion. She suddenly stood still like a living picture, as soon as she became conscious of this conception, and her eye sought for a mirror in which to behold herself.

She shook her head, and turned back as if she were coming upon the stage out of one of the side scenes.

"Will you tell me how you have become so great and daring, so free — the only free man?"

Sonnenkamp, the strong man, trembled within himself. He had an avowal upon his lips, but he dared not utter it; he had a demoniacal smile upon his face, as Bella said to him: —

"There is one thing only you must not do; speak not to me of love: anything but the 'fable convenue;' that is nothing — for you nothing and to me nothing. Still another thing. You will learn it now too, if you do not know it already, — the greatest tyranny in the world is the family. Grieve not for your family; a hero has no family, and besides, it is only a sentimental tradition that the heroes used to play with their children on the floor. You must be alone, think of yourself alone; then you are strong, you are like a man born of Byron's fancy, and such a man actually stands before me. You have made only one mistake; a man like you, such a hero, should have no family, should not want to have any. Be firm, do not suffer yourself to be cleft in twain and crushed to atoms through this mistake."

Sonnenkamp was still too much shaken not to feel a shudder creep over him at the sight of this apparition, that seemed to have sprung out from the world of fable; he said that he had had an idea, of the mere existence of which he had only been conscious in a shadowy way, but now it was clear; he was resolved to continue the struggle, to wage open war, that is, covert but decisive war; he would bring the virtuous people hereabouts to a different way of thinking,

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this next would be his task. He had a plan that was not yet clear to him, but it would become clear.

Bella said that she did not wish to speak to any one in the house beside himself; she was going back at once, but she trusted that he would be firm and stand his ground, for otherwise she would have to despise all men, and among them the only one who had ever won her respect by real power.

Sonnenkamp opened the seed-room, accompanied Bella through it, and opened the door that led to the private stair overrun with climbing plants. Here he kissed her hand at parting. But while still on the steps, Bella called after him: —

"And one thing more! The first thing for you to do is to free yourself from slavery; you must send away this teacher's family."

She made a repellant gesture, and added: —

"This teacher's family should establish their transcendental distillery in the little University town once more."

When Sonnenkamp returned to his room after Bella's departure, it seemed to him as if everything had been only a dream; but he still breathed the odor of the delicate perfumery which Bella's garments had left behind in his room; he still saw the chair on which she had been sitting; she had actually been there.

But Bella did not reach home unseen. In the park she met her brother. She confessed to him frankly that she had been to see Sonnenkamp, to cheer him up; she praised Otto for his constancy, and for despising the miserable, weak world.

"I could love this man!" she exclaimed; "he is a conqueror, he has won for himself a bit of the world. Pshaw! Let them grub for remains from the Roman world, which was so powerful and despised every one that spoke of justice for the slaves — and what are they themselves?"

"Sister," said Pranken playfully, "you are still too young and handsome to dress yourself up with those ingenious whims; you do not need such cosmetic contrivances."

Bella drew back a step from him, and then said: —

"No, I wanted to say a word to you; but no. Only persevere, and bring your designs with Manna to a point soon. How does the little cloister-plant do?"

"I beg of you, Bella ——"

"Well, well, I'm going directly, I can do none of you any good."

She turned away quickly, and went back to Wolfsgarten.

Pranken looked after her with astonishment. He composed himself, for the Priest came up. He reached out his hand to him humbly, and spoke very gratefully of his having come voluntarily to build up anew the house of sorrow.

CHAPTER XII.

COUNTER-POISON.

Prince Valerian, who had met with such a rough rebuff from Sonnenkamp, had himself announced to Eric. Roland, who was in the next room, heard him say, the first thing as he entered: —

"Where is Roland?"

"He desires to be left alone," answered Eric; and then the Prince declared that Eric was best able to form an opinion as to what might be good for Roland; but for his part, he could not help thinking that intercourse with men in whose eyes he could behold the love they bore him, would be of greater assistance than anything else in this unspeakable sorrow.

Roland rose to his feet in the next room. Would this really be better than musing by one's self? He kept quiet, and heard the Prince ask how the daughter and how the wife had received the exposure of the dreadful secret.

The Prince spoke in a loud, Eric in a low tone, and Roland did not understand Eric's answer.

The Prince continued in the same loud tone. Herr Weidmann was indignant at the manner in which Professor Crutius had brought this matter before the public, and the statement that Doctor Fritz might have had a share in this malicious publication, was, without doubt, a falsehood. Doctor Fritz had said again and again, when he came to take away his child, that he hoped the whole affair would remain concealed, on account of Sonnenkamp's children.

Roland trembled.

Does Lilian know it over the sea? Or when will she hear of it? How will she bear it? And will she cry about him? And she told him, that time in the garden, that he must come home and help to deliver the world from wrong.

He stretched his arms upwards, as if he must hasten from that spot, and do something at that very moment.

The Prince, in the neighboring room, went on to say that Herr Weidmann had seriously considered whether he himself ought not to go over to Villa Eden, then and there to offer his assistance, but he had, after thinking the matter over, perceived that this would be of no practical benefit, and there-

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fore he had counselled the Prince to carry out his own purpose.

"Ah!" he exclaimed, "for the first time in a long while has the high social position I am permitted to occupy brought me joy, or, rather joy is not the right word. I thought to myself that, on this account, I should be able to effect here more than any one else, and particularly for your pupil Roland, whom I love so dearly, and whose afflictions give me not a moment's peace."

In the next room, Roland folded his outstretched hands, and the thought passed through his mind:—

Oh; the world is good; no, it is not so bad as you on the journey wished to make me believe. Here is one man who feels for me.

The Prince continued:—

"Ah, Captain, what are we, who are set in high places? Our way of living is just the same as yours is here, only it is historically superannuated, overgrown with moss. On the way here, I have seen everything anew. Our serfs were sold with the land and soil. It is the same thing, or rather, worse, for they were men of the same race. And, Captain, on my way here I became a terrible heretic. I asked myself what have those done who were sent into the world to preach, and never to stop preaching, love and brotherhood. They have looked quietly upon the fact that there are thousands and thousands of slaves, thousands and thousands of serfs. And then the thought struck me, Who is freeing the serfs and the slaves? Pure humanity is unloosing their chains."

Again the thought flashed through Roland's mind: Is not that the same thing that he himself had already thought of—and Manna too? The youth's eyes opened wide, as Eric now answered:—

"I am far away from what is called the church, but the doctrine of Christ is still a root of that humanity which is now fast ripening into maturity."

"You are like Herr Weidmann, who also——" exclaimed the Prince. He could not finish the sentence, for the Doctor entered.

"Where is Roland?" he also inquired, after the greeting was over.

He too got the answer that Roland wished to be alone, and the Doctor said,—

"I approve of that. Is he very much agitated? Mind, days will come when he will fall into dulness and apathy; let it have its course with him, and at the same time have the greatest patience with him. The noblest gift of nature is stupor; it is part of the soul's sleep; the simpleton and the brute have it constantly; they consequently never reach that pitch of intense excitement that endangers all existence; and nature, too, takes pity on the sensitive man, and gives him stupor. In the first place, when he begins to give way under his grief, then, I beg of you, give Roland to understand then the affair is not so terrible as it seems; there is a good deal of depravity right under our very eyes; and where is it that this depravity does not exist! Do you remember my asking you when you came here first, how long since you had been a believer in depravity?"

Eric said he did.

The Doctor continued in a cheerful tone:—

"Now that evil is here, don't lose heart; you have done nobly so long as you have put faith in human purity; I hope, now that you have become a convert to the new faith, you will still remain equally strong. Yes, Captain, we think we are teachers when we are only pupils. Do you know what vexed me most in the publication of this story?"

"How could I?"

"I was indignant that the sated, self-sufficient portion of the community, pluming itself upon its external white-wash of decency, should now give itself a treat. Each person looks at himself: Ah, I am a magnificent being, compared with this monster. And still the vileness of the slave trade is only more notorious than that of a thousand other occupations. In the Jockey Club the 'Jeunesse dorée' are railing at the monster Sonnenkamp, and what are they themselves? Hundreds of occupations are constantly hanging on the verge of crime. Yes, the old theology teaches me that as Sodom might in old times have stood, if only just so many righteous men were to be found in it, so it is to-day. The sun shines only for the few just men; and in every human being there is a complete Sodom; but there is also in him something of righteousness, and because of that he continues to live."

Eric and the Prince looked in surprise at the Doctor, whom they had never before really known. Within, in the next room, Roland had seized hold of his forehead, as if questioning whether he comprehended all this, and in what it would all end.

The Doctor seemed to enjoy his triumph, or rather the perplexity he had caused, and he exclaimed in a loud voice, louder even than before,—

"For all that, I have for this Herr Sonnenkamp great respect."

He paused, and then continued:—

"This Herr Sonnenkamp, or, for aught I care, Banfield, has kept pretty stiff, he has

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not bowed down before the priesthood; if he had, this would have been covered up. That he has not done so, shows power; and, besides, I think I have kept myself free from the sentimental epidemic. These niggers are not my fellow creatures; human beings of a black complexion have no high destiny; from their whole physical conformation, they belong out in the heat of the sun, at hard work. Slavery is not such a bad thing, after all; we would not find it ill, if we, too, had slaves for servants. When serving people know that their place is to serve and that they can not play the master, they are more faithful in their work, and one can take better care of them. And I have many a time thought to myself how it would be, if my men-servants and maid-servants were all at once transformed into Africans; it would be a surprise, but one would have to get reconciled to it. I am loth to accept these darkies as my brothers. And can you think of a negro as a painter? A nigger cannot even see himself in the looking-glass. And can you picture to yourself a nigger statesman, a nigger professor?"

Eric was full of indignation at all this, but he had to listen to it; there was no chance for him to say anything, as the Doctor cried out in a still louder voice, —

"Don't let Roland fall into sentimentality. You, as philologist, must know the story of that — wasn't it a Roman emperor? — who had made a great deal of money by the slave-trade, and whose son took up a piece of the gold acquired by this means, held it to his nose, and asked: 'num olet?' Roland should not continue to carry on the slave-trade; it isn't just the thing; it's always unpleasant and dirty; but he mustn't let what has happened ruin him; he should know that he's the legitimate owner of the property, and needn't ask how the money was obtained — the legitimate owner," he repeated once again in a loud voice.

Eric now noticed for the first time that the Doctor was speaking neither to him nor to the Prince.

The Doctor was aware that Roland was listening to everything, in the next room, and everything was directed to him. Should he by a protest interfere with the healing skill of the Doctor, who sought to cure the effect of the poison by a counter poison?

"Ah! you come in good time," cried the Doctor to the Priest, as he entered. "I have been fore-stalling you a little in your office, and now you can give me some assistance."

He repeated hurriedly to the Priest what he had been saying, and he was surprised when the Priest rejoined: —

"I do not agree with you. Yes, you gentlemen of philosophy and the self-government of mankind — remember, Captain, I told you so the first time we met — you have nothing but arrogance or dejection; you know no such thing as equanimity, because the firmly fixed rock of the Positive is lacking in you."

Eric, who had been holding his breath while the Doctor was holding forth, was on the point of replying sharply to the Priest, when the door was thrown open and Roland entered.

"No Doctor," exclaimed he, "you have not converted me. I still know — I still know — and you, Herr Priest, it does not become me to dispute with you, but I will not suffer my friend, my brother, my Eric, to be assailed here. He has given me the Positive, the belief in our duty, in our activity, in our never-ceasing self-devotion. I will show for his sake, and for my sake, what I can yet do in life."

The Prince embraced Roland; the Doctor took the Priest outside, and said to him in a low tone: —

"Don't trouble the young man, a favorable crisis has set in. Come with me, I beg of you."

He drew the Priest away almost by force.

Eric, Roland, and the Prince still sat a long while together; then they had the horses saddled, Eric and Roland accompanying the Prince a part of the way.

After they had ridden a short distance, they saw a strange shape on the road; Roland cried out suddenly: —

"There's something walking, I think — I think — no, I am not mistaken, it's our friend Knopf!"

It was no other than Knopf. He was going along quietly in the dark, quizzing himself sorely why it was he did not understand the world; it really ought to explain itself to him, for he held the world so dear. Why is it so reserved and full of secresy? What would now become of Roland? And amongst the rest entered a lighter and more trifling sorrow, that the Major had utterly forgotten him. Knopf did not think ill of him for it, not in the least; for Heaven knows that in such confusion one had his head full enough; who can think of everything? He confessed modestly to himself that he, of course, could not have been of any assistance whatever, he was so awkward; there was Herr Dournay, and Pranken — he knew nothing at all about Prince Valerian. Thus he was trudging along in the dark, and questioning himself in every way, and then looking up at the stars.

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"Herr Knopf! Herr Knopf! Herr Magister!" was shouted out by different voices. Knopf stopped. Roland sprang quickly off his horse, embraced the old teacher, and exclaimed: —

"Ah, forgive me for what I have done to you; I've been wanting to say it to you — long ago ——" At the words, "long ago," Roland's voice trembled violently.

"You have already, and it has been forgiven for a long time; but how does it happen that you are here?"

Everything was soon explained. Knopf rested his hand on Roland's shoulder all the while, as if he could lend him some of his strength; and he pressed back the spectacles very close to his eyes, when he heard and saw how the youth was beginning to bear up manfully under the terrible event. He pressed Eric's hand as if he would say: —

You can be happy, you have imparted to the boy genuine strength.

When at last they were bidding good-bye, Roland begged Knopf to ride home on the pony. Knopf assured him repeatedly that it was a pleasure to him to roam about in the dark on foot; Roland asserted that Puck was a right gentle beast, so tractable, so easy and intelligent; and he said to the little horse: —

"I want you to be good now, and make up for all the trouble I gave to my old teacher; do be well-behaved."

Knopf continued to object, and at last he brought out, in a plaintive tone, that he had no straps to his pants. Everybody laughed, and Roland in the midst of his sorrow laughed too. Knopf was extremely happy to find that Roland could laugh, and now he yielded. Roland helped him mount, stroking the arm of his former teacher, and stroking the horse; Knopf and the Prince rode off together. But Eric did not mount again; leading his horse by the bridle, he went hand in hand with Roland to the Villa.

And now, in the still night, Eric was incessantly occupied in thinking of what the Doctor had said; how great was the discord in the whole modern world, so that the life of states, and even many of the occupations of private life, were not regulated by ethical principles. Not in the way prescribed by the Doctor, — besides, it had left no impression whatever on Roland, — would the youth gain rest and strength, nor in any way but in the acknowledgment that each one must strive earnestly to conform to the moral law, and make it an integral part of his actual life.

Roland listened to him quietly, occasionally clasping the speaker's hand with a firmer hold.

When they were approaching the Villa, Roland said, sighing deeply: —

"Ah, Eric, now the house is robbed in a very different way from what it was when we came back from Wolfsgarten."

No change had been wrought in the dejected feelings of Roland by what the Doctor had said, nor by Eric's utterances; the only effect was to enable him to express himself freely.

CHAPTER XIV.

A NEW PILLORY AT THE CHURCH DOOR.

The swallows were flocking together and twittering over Villa Eden, over the jail not far from the house of the Justice, over the military club-house in the capital, and wherever they flocked, everybody was talking of Sonnenkamp, of what had happened and of what would happen to him.

In the basement, in the large room near the kitchen, Sonnenkamp's domestics were sitting at table. Bertram's chair was vacant. Somebody was saying that the porter would have to scrape the writing off the wall, and that he had already given the master notice that he should leave. The "chief," who spoke German quite fluently when he was in anger, was cursing the rascality of domestics in leaving their master, who had no farther to concern themselves than to get their regular pay. The Cooper contested this. Of course, the honor of the master was the honor of the servant, but they ought still to remain with Sonnenkamp; if there was a good deal in him that was bad, there was also much that was good. Joseph, whose personal opinion did not have its just weight, on account of his confidential relations with Sonnenkamp, was glad that the Cooper had hit the right point.

The second coachman, the Englishman, who also wanted to give notice of leaving, now said that he should not do it; but of course he must always be ready for a boxing-match.

The Squirrel expressed his fear that some one would set fire to the place, for the whole neighborhood was possessed by the devil. Lootz was not there, and nobody knew where the master had sent him. Old Ursel mourned over the innocent children, at the same time eating away with a fearful appetite, and uttering loudest lamentations with her mouth full.

The stuttering gardener made the proposal that they should remain, but should make a joint demand for higher wages.

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All agreed to do this, except Joseph and the Cooper, but were puzzled how it could be brought about.

The subterraneans were unanimous in their eulogies of Pranken. He was a nobleman whose like could not be found, who did not desert the master for a single moment. He had ridden out with him in the broad daylight, and did not concern himself as to what his noble relatives might say of him.

Here, underground, they were also glad to know that men were ungrateful and base. It was even known here that Sonnenkamp had made a present of the Villa to the Cabinetsrath, for what the latter had given for it was only a trifling sum; and now the gardener of the Cabinetsrath had reported that the country-house and the vineyard had just been sold to the American Consul, as a sort of gibe at Sonnenkamp; for the family of the Cabinetsrath wished to have no more intercourse with Villa Eden.

In just the same way, although by men of a different position in society, were Sonnenkamp's circumstances discussed in the military club-house of the capital, as well as in the beer-houses. For some time, Adams, the negro servant of the Prince, had everywhere been the topic of conversation. There were various wonderful stories how five men were hardly able to restrain the raving negro; that he had tried to choke Sonnenkamp, — only with the greatest difficulty had they succeeded in getting him out of the capital, and removing him to a hunting-seat. Then the conversation would turn upon Sonnenkamp. Everybody asked what he would do now; no one could understand how it was that Pranken stood by him, and how the family permitted such a thing. In the military club-house there was also an Ursel, but here she took the form of a pensioned lady of high rank, who also ate heartily, and, while eating, spoke very compassionately of the poor children of the millionaire.

But the conversation took a very peculiar turn in the house of Dr. Richard, where they were to-day giving a great coffee-party in honor of Frau Weidmann, who had come on a visit; it had been arranged several days before, and the Professorin, Aunt Claudine, Frau Ceres, and Manna had been invited; of course they did not come. Here and there they were earnestly discussing how they should treat the Sonnenkamp family, if they had the audacity not to leave the country as soon as possible.

Lina, who had returned from the trip with her betrothed, said that she would be the same in Sonnenkamp's family that she had always been, and that she would remain Manna's friend; for wherever the Professorin was, there any one might maintain social intercourse without detriment to one's honor.

The tone of the conversation became kindly as Frau Weidmann gave unreserved support to Lina; she spoke of the noble character of Roland, who had been on a visit to her house, and of the solid worth of Eric, whom her husband held in very high esteem.

Thus every one in the house, as well as in the neighborhood, seemed to be putting himself right, and adopting a moderate, kindly tone towards the Sonnenkamp family. But the bitter, detestable consequences of the occurrence manifested themselves in the green cottage on Sunday morning.

During the hour before mass, the indigent neighbors used to come for their regular weekly allowance; to-day there came only one solitary woman, in a sorry plight. She was a drunkard's wife, who was forever complaining and lamenting; she was constantly fretting about two children, one of which she held in her arms, and the other she led by her side.

It was only with some difficulty that the Professorin had brought herself to furnish assistance to this woman, because she was afraid that the drunkard would only be made more shiftless by so doing; she had yielded to the persuasion of Fräulein Milch, though she generally cut the talkative woman short. But she had to listen patiently to-day, now that the woman came alone and no others were there. The Professorin trembled when the woman said to her: —

"Yes, yes, such is the world! It's a topsy-turvy world. My husband makes wife and children unhappy because he squanders everything, and Herr Sonnenkamp makes wife and children unhappy because he has got everything. Yes, just so! It's a world turned upside down."

She assured the Professorin that she would take none of the gold of the slave-trader, if she could help herself in any other way.

And out of this gold my son is to enrich himself, said the Professorin, to herself, sitting there alone soon afterwards, as the bells were ringing. She sat quiet for a long time. Then Eric came in and said:

"Ah mother, another dreadful thing has happened!"

"Something new? Still another dreadful thing? What has happened?"

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"He was bold and defiant; he went to church with Pranken."

"Who did?"

"Herr Sonnenkamp. And when he came out of the church, there stood all the people in a row, looking at him. He went up to a poor man and handed him a gold piece; the poor man took the money, and then threw it away, exclaiming: 'I will have nothing from you!' And they all cried out: 'We want nothing more from you! Take yourself out of the country.' Sonnenkamp went away, the piece of gold is still lying there before the church door, and no one will pick it up. O mother, the people are great and horrible at the same time."

"Did you see it too? Where did you hear about it? Were you too at the church?"

"No; Manna and Roland told me, and now they are sitting in the garden together, and weeping. I have hastened to you, for you only can help us. Comfort them, strengthen them."

"I have done all I can," said the Mother; "I am too weak, and I am afraid I shall be ill."

Eric called his aunt to remain with his mother, and returned to Roland and Manna.

The Doctor was sent for that very afternoon. The Professorin was sick.

CHAPTER XV.

A WHOLESOME ILLNESS.

She whom all depended upon, to whom every one repaired, sure of care and assistance, — she was now unexpectedly in want of assistance herself, and was in a dangerous condition. The remarkable events and vicissitudes some had begun to overcome by means of their youthful strength, by stern defiance, and others by indifference; the Professorin alone felt a constant gnawing at her heart day and night.

Eric had remarked several days before, although he ascribed it to the sudden shock she had received, that his mother, when he was walking before her hand in hand with Manna, took everything cordially and kindly, but still dully, and as if weighed down by some feeling of depression. His mother was in the habit of seeking help from no one, she had always the power of assisting others, and in this doing for others she always found renewed strength.

From the day on which Fräulein Milch made that communication to her, it had been different; she performed only mechanically the duties, which had previously been executed with such freedom and animation.

From that day forth, she had determined to keep clear of every luxurious indulgence which this ostentatious man might feel like putting in her way, and this she would do in a modest and retiring manner; from that day forth she looked upon herself as a traveller receiving temporary hospitalities, for all the home feeling of comfort had been taken away from her. She was prepared at any hour to pack up all that she possessed, and all that was arranged in such a quiet way about her, and remove to some other place.

She had never in her life been troubled by regret, she had done nothing for which she could reproach herself, or the memory of which was to be effaced; but now she was beset by a constant feeling of regret.

Why had she been so thoughtless as to connect herself with such a mysterious and disintegrated family?

Joy and grief affected her by turns, like one suffering under the delirium of fever.

Eric's happiness in loving Manna and being so deeply loved, which before had excited within her such a blissful pleasure, she now listened to and looked upon with an almost forced interest; and when Bella had so deeply mortified her, she could scarcely make any resistance, for it seemed to her as if it concerned someone else, and had no relation to herself. Thus she lived estranged from herself, but made no complaint, hoping that everything would right itself. She had no idea that there was an inward disturbance and distraction which would show itself on the first favorable opportunity. Now, when the needy declined charity at her hands, that inexpressible sadness, so long hidden and repressed, broke forth. It seemed to her inexplicable that her only son, her all in this world, was to be engrafted into this family.

The Doctor had found the Mother in a state of febrile excitement; he gave her a composing draught; but the opinion which he expressed before Eric, Manna, and Roland, had a still more quieting effect. The Mother complained that she had never known how much people could be at variance with themselves and with others. The Doctor replied, with a smile, that people were not generally so nice in their housekeeping as she was, and, referring to Sonnenkamp, said that there is such a thing as a zone of mind, or whatever else you may choose to call it, which furnishes organizations entirely exotic, but which nevertheless have their natural conditions, as our customary, everyday ones have. The constant solitary speculation and refining of thought, the recur-

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ring to her life with her husband, there thoroughly deep-seated melancholy of the noble woman showed itself in an increased sensitiveness and irritability; and it had reached such a point that fears were entertained for her life; something might occur which would be the occasion of suddenly extinguishing this flickering flame of life.

Eric, Manna, and Roland, trembling and apprehensive, surrounded the Mother with constant care, and in this anxiety for another, there was a great deliverance for themselves. The Doctor once said in the library to Eric: —

"If your mother had become sick on purpose, it would have been one of the wisest things she could have done; for it helps you all to get possession of yourselves."

Sonnenkamp also expressed profound sympathy, but he felt provoked; it is not now the time for sickness, every one must now stand erect so as to bear up under the storm. After some days, however, he found the Professorin's illness very opportune; it took some time to get accustomed to the new order of things; he even admitted to himself directly, that he would not regret it much if the Professorin should die; that would produce a change of feeling, and in the mean while everything was getting better very fast.

Fräulein Milch did not suffer Manna to devote herself entirely to the Professorin as she wished to do, and she herself was the best of nurses.

The Major went about in utter desolation. More than any one else, not even excepting the children, he was the most deeply affected, perhaps, by the disclosure of Sonnenkamp's past life.

"The world is right; that is, Fräulein Milch is right," he was all the time saying. "She has told me all along that I don't know men, and she's right."

In the mean while, he found a good place of refuge; he went to see Weidmann, at Mattenheim, for a couple of days.

CHAPTER XVI.

A BLACK WAVE.

On Sunday evening a bustling crowd was streaming along the white road, up and down the banks of the river, and to and fro between the vineyards, all seeming to have one end in view.

Sonnenkamp, wrapped in his cloak, was sitting on the flat roof of his house, gazing with a sensation of dizziness upon the surrounding landscape. Once he walked to the eaves. His brain reeled, and he wanted to throw himself off.

So then it was all over, the hard thinking and everything! Nevertheless he stepped back again, and sat upon the flat roof until nightfall.

Suddenly his ear was struck by howls, cat-calls, hootings, rattling and clashing, as though hell itself had been let loose.

He sprang to his feet. Are these sounds within him? Is this all imagination? He hears them distinctly; the noise comes from beneath. It rises from the road, and he descries by the torchlight fantastic figures with black faces. Is that, too, only imagination? Have they come hither from the other world, those creatures with human forms?

"You must leave the country!"

"Begone to your blacks!"

"We'll fetch him out, and paint him black too!"

"And we'll tie him on his black nag, and lead him through the country, shouting: 'Look at him!'"

Then followed more whistling, bawling, crashing, rattling, and a sharp, jangling sound, produced by banging pots and kettles together. It was a most infernal din.

Then arose in Sonnenkamp's memory a vision of the past, — the image of a man accused of having incited slaves to revolt, driven through the streets, naked, tarred and feathered, pelted with rotten apples and cabbage stumps. The scene changed, and on the gallows hung John Brown.

The report of a gun was heard, and the voice of Pranken, crying: —

"Shoot the dogs down! I'll take the responsibility!"

Only one more shot resounded; then the raging mob came surging against the gate, which gave way with a crash, and in rushed the frantic rabble, all with black faces, and the cry arose: —

"We'll choke the whole of 'em!"

"Where is he?"

"Give him up, or we'll smash everything to pieces!"

Sonnenkamp hastened down from the roof through the house, and, standing on the open balcony, heard Eric's voice, warning the crowd in powerful tones: —

"Are you men? Are you Germans? Who has made judges of you? Speak! I will answer you. You are bringing misery upon yourselves. You will be recognized and detected, in spite of your blackened faces. To-morrow will come the appointed judge; for we live in a well-governed country, and you are all of you amenable to the law."

"We don't want to touch the Captain!" cried a voice from the crowd.

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Eric continued, —

"If there is one among you who can tell what you want, let him come forward."

A man with blackened face, whom Eric did not recognize, stepped forth and said, —

"Captain, it's me, the Screamer; let me speak. The new wine has got into our folks' heads below there. I'm as sober as a cat," added he, stammering.

"But what do they want?"

"They wish that Herr Sonnenkamp, or whatever his name is, should leave our part of the country, and go where he belongs."

"Yes! Let him take himself off!"

"And give me back my meadow!"

"And me my vineyard!"

"And me my house!"

Such were the cries uttered by the mob.

Claus quickly joined Eric on the steps, and called to the rabble, —

"If you go on shouting out such crazy stuff, and speaking all together, I'll be the first to choke any one who tries to get into the house."

"Let him be off!"

"Let him clear out!" "Hustle him out!" was the general cry.

Just as this was yelled forth, Sonnenkamp appeared on the steps. The howling, shrieking, and kettle-banging began anew; stones crashed through the great window-panes.

The Screamer, hastening up the steps, placed himself before Sonnenkamp, saying, —

"Keep still: I'll protect you."

Then he shouted, yet more violently, —

"If you say one word more, and if every man doesn't hold his neighbor, so that he can't move his arms, I'll be the first to shoot you down, without caring whether I hit the innocent or the guilty."

"Men, what have I done to you?" cried Sonnenkamp.

"Cannibal!"

"Kidnapper!"

"Slave dealer!"

"And if I were," exclaimed Sonnenkamp, "what gives you the right to judge me?"

"You must clear out of this!"

"Make yourself scarce!" was the cry from beneath.

"Herr Sonnenkamp, and you, Captain," said Claus, hastily addressing them both, "I only joined this savage troop, because I saw it was no use trying to hold them back, but I've caught them by the halter, and if you'll just leave everything to me, we'll make a carnival sport out of the whole concern. You speak first, Captain, and I beg you to keep still, Herr Sonnenkamp."

"My men," began Eric, "let the stones alone. Do you know the great word, — 'He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone!' Has not every one of you done something that ——"

"We've never sold men! Oh! the ogre!" they cried from below.

Eric could say no more. At this juncture Manna appeared, holding a branched candlestick with two lighted candles. A cry of astonishment went through the crowd; then all was still for a second, all eyes being rivetted on the girl as she stood there, pale, with sparkling eyes and dishevelled hair.

Roland, placing himself beside Eric, called out in a voice which resounded far and wide, —

"Stone us! Tear us in pieces! Come on; we are unarmed!"

"We don't want to hurt the children!"

"But the man-seller must begone!"

"Yes, he must clear out!"

"Be off!"

Again the tumult seemed increasing, the rioters pushing one another forward. All at once they recoiled, even those upon the steps shrinking back. Beneath the great door-way a white-robed form appeared, and her hair was gray.

The noisy wretches in the court were struck dumb, gazing upward with glances of amazement. Those assembled on the steps, turning round, saw the Professorin, standing there like a being from another world, from the boundless space of Eternity. Stepping quietly to the balustrade, she first raised and then lowered her hands as in blessing, as if calming the stormy waves. Profound silence reigned, and she spoke in tones which might be heard a great way off:

"No man can expiate his brother's sin by wrong-doing. Do not sin yourselves. Restrain yourselves, lest to-morrow you weep over to-day."

Her voice grew more powerful, as she said: —

"Conquer yourselves!"

Laying her hand on Sonnenkamp's shoulder, she said, in sonorous tones: —

"I promise you that this man, who has already done good, shall perform a deed so great as to reconcile you all to him. Do you believe me?"

"Yes, we believe the Professorin!"

"Hurrah for the Professorin! Huzza! Huzza!"

"Come along home! It's enough!"

A man carrying a drum struck up a march, when, just as the mob was about to depart, something came rattling along, helmets gleamed, the fire-engine came up, and a jet of water suddenly spurted over them all. A like shower came from the other side; for

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Joseph had hastened to the head-gardener's, and the hose was now used with effect. The stream from either side rose high into the air, and they all went off, grumbling, laughing, and cursing.

The men were still standing on the steps, and Eric was the first to speak, saying: —

"Mother, you here? And from your sick-bed? This may cause your death."

"No, my son, it has given life to me, to you, to all, and purity to all. I am ill no longer; a great and beautiful and fortunate deed has saved me."

Sonnenkamp, taking off his cloak, wrapped the Professorin in it, and they led the old lady, whose eyes shone wonderfully, into the great hall, where she sat down, while they all stood around her as about a saint.

Manna, kneeling before her, took her hands, and wept copious tears upon them.

"Now I only beg for quiet," said the Professorin. "I am calm; give me no further excitement now. I heard it, I know not how; I came hither, I know not how. Something called and impelled me, and it has ended well. Oh, believe that everything will yet turn out for the best. Herr Sonnenkamp, give me your hand. I have something to say to you."

"I will fulfil whatever you may command."

"You must do something, although I do not yet know what, in order to pacify the minds of these people."

"I will. I will summon a jury, in the choice of which you must assist me. To them I will unfold my life, and into their hands I will leave the decision of what is to be done."

"That is a happy idea. To-morrow we will carry it out. Now it is enough," said the Professorin, in a tone soothing to the others and to herself. "Manna, go to your mother," added she.

Manna left the room.

It was late before those assembled in the Villa separated. The Professorin must spend the night there. Sonnenkamp would not have it otherwise. He gave her the best room in the house, and Eric sat by his mother's bed until she fell asleep.

But without, on the banks of the Rhine, stood a multitude, washing their black faces clean again, and recovering from the effects of the new wine. In the night a black wave rolled past the Villa, and down the river to the sea.

Oh! If the black deed could only be thus wiped off, and sunk in the ocean of Eternity!

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BOOK XIII. CHAPTER I.

OBLITERATED TRACES.

The gardeners raked smooth the foot-paths: they bound up the down-trodden shrubs again, removing the broken ones. Even the grooms assisted to-day in the garden, while up in the house the glaziers were already busy, putting in new squares of plate-glass. When the gentlemen and ladies wake up, they shall see as little as possible of last night's tumult.

No one in the whole house awoke until the morning was far spent. Even Manna was not visible. Perhaps this was the first time in her life that she had omitted going to church. The night's experience had been hard for her to bear; for when, after the riot, she came to her mother, the latter kept crying out, —

"They will tar and feather him! They will tar and feather him! Oh! why did he go among our enemies?"

Her mother put her fingers in her ears; and when Manna tried to describe how the Professorin had appeared as a rescuing angel, Frau Ceres broke into loud laughter.

"Yes, indeed! Europeans allow old women to tame them!"

Manna was silent, and buried her face in her hands. She had heard this riot long beforehand in spirit; and, as she stood on the steps, she had felt that all this had previously been made known to her in dreams, and that it would vanish like a dream.

Then, remembering her love, she realized that life cannot be sacrified to another as an expiation, but that it can be exalted for another's sake. Once again horror seized upon her soul. She heard the voices of hell, and a hell opened within her. Hast thou sinned in proving faithless? Would every thing have been better, would the dreadful thing not have happened, if thou hadst remained true? Who knows whether, through some secret working, every thing did not become publicly known in the capital in the very hour of thy perfidy?

She wished to make her thoughts like those of the martyrs, who endured stoning with bowed heads; but, in the midst of this violent soul-torment, she only saw Eric's image again; and rising, as though he had called her, she felt as if his hand were laid upon her head.

Thus had Manna returned to her room, full of fear, and yet rising again as upon a wave of happiness: and thus she slept far into the day, hearing nothing of the voice of the bell which called her, and with no suspicion of what was now being said about her; for not far from the church stood Pranken with Fräulein Perini.

Ever since his return from town, Pranken had felt a fresh irritation, which directed itself more and more against Eric; and, at the arrival of Prince Valerian, he was highly incensed on observing how every one went instantly to Eric's chamber, as though Eric were the centre of the house. "This shall be changed," he said to himself. "This teacher must find out who he is." By reason of the riot, however, this teacher's family had again become conspicuous; the pitiful canaille having allowed themselves to be soothed by an old woman.

Pranken had walked furiously through the park, and finally took the road leading to the church. Here on this road, now, on this morning, he would bring Manna to a decision; then he would have his own way with the house, and discharge the teacher's family. He waited long; but Manna did not come. At last, seeing Fräulein Perini alone, he greeted her, and asked where Manna was, and whether she was well.

"Why don't you ask after *my* health?" replied she somewhat tartly. "I have something of great importance to impart to you; but you do not seem to think it worth while to trouble yourself about me."

"Indeed I do; but you should reflect" —

"I do reflect that you ought to reflect that I too have an existence. However, I have something of great importance to impart to you."

"Oh! please, you were always so kind" —

"Yes, yes, only too kind; but you forget me too quickly. Well, then, what would you do if you were told that that arrogant tutor aspired to win the hand of your betrothed?"

Fräulein Perini laughed, and Pranken was frightened, terrified. He had never heard her laugh so; and how she laughed in exactly the same tone, and made precisely the same bending of the neck, as little Nelly. How ridiculous, how inconceivable, that she should occur to his mind at this juncture!

"You seem in a very good humor after the riot," said he, trying to appear jocose. "You must tell me the rest after church: the third bell is just ringing."

"Oh, no! I can neglect church for this matter. A work of mercy absolves" —

"A work of mercy?"

"Yes."

And now Fräulein Perini told how she had seen Manna coming out of Eric's room;

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and how every thing had evidently been arranged in the green cottage, and was now settled; also how the maid-servant of the green cottage had even said that Manna had taken with her the marriage-contract, which had been drawn up in the library.

Pranken shook his head incredulously. Fräulein Perini, however, stung him again by asking whether he would promise, in case he came into possession of Manna and of all her property, to consecrate the Villa as a convent. He shrugged his shoulders; and the look came again into Fräulein Perini's eyes, which she had once given to Bella after she had turned away. She stung and irritated Pranken; for she saw that he still despised her, and she wished to ruin him. He must promise her, that, if the affair proved inevitable, he would challenge this Herr Dournay, and shoot him if possible.

Pranken looked bewildered. Again an old memory arose within him; at the time that he had travelled with Eric to Wolfsgarten, he had seen this as in a vision. Must it then take place? He demurred, he hung back; he said that then he should certainly lose Manna. If he fell, then all would naturally be over. If he killed Eric, Manna would never become the wife of a man who had killed another on her account.

Fräulein Perini cast down her eyes, in order to hide her malicious smile. Things were now taking exactly the turn she had wished; Manna should lose them both, and find in the convent her only refuge.

They had talked so long that church was over, and as the clergyman came out, Fräulein Perini went with him, and Pranken turned back towards the Villa. He met the Doctor and Eric, walking together and engaged in earnest conversation.

The Doctor was in as good spirits as ever, and was expounding to Eric how the fresh must, which is so joyously drunk and which tastes so deliciously, is, according to the assertion of old people, a real cure, building the whole body anew, so that it is taken both for enjoyment and for the health. "Thus the crisis caused by the intoxication of the new wine is really good. So it is with this riot. It has been beneficial in many ways. The anger of the inhabitants of the neighborhood has exceeded all reasonable bounds, and has thus lost all pretension of justice. On this side there is nothing more to be feared. But even in the house itself it is clear that life will henceforth be more vigorous. That they are all sleeping is a good sign."

They met the Cooper, and the Doctor would hear the whole story over again, growing very merry over the account of the effect produced in the park by the fire-engine and the water-works. The Cooper narrated how the engine had been quickly made ready, as Herr Sonnenkamp had presented it with the very best hose.

They soon met a group of men, delegates sent by the different communities to assure Herr Sonnenkamp of their readiness to protect him in any emergency, if he would only abstain from bringing an action for what had occurred.

The Doctor begged the men to come back on Sunday, saying that he would previously inform Herr Sonnenkamp.

He turned back with Eric, and they were not a little surprised at finding the Professorin already on the terrace with Manna. The Doctor joked very merrily over the genius of accident, which could accomplish more than all science. He declared the Professorin to be entirely cured. The Professorin had recovered the best part of herself, namely, her calmness, her courage, and the steadfast firmness of her character, and she said, —

"There is a wonderful power of healing in being at one with the great common heart. That which all men know is no longer so heavy and horrible; the hardest part of a criminal's fate must be the feeling of isolation, of separation; in the midst of all society he must feel like a secluded prisoner, for he has something locked and hidden within himself, which no one else must know of."

As soon as the Professorin could transpose an event and its consequences into the sphere of abstract thought, it seemed no longer to weigh upon her. Above all she exhorted her son not to take it for granted that something must be instantly done, saying that it was of the first importance to keep still.

The Doctor, on inquiring whether the Countess Bella had not been there as yet, was told that she had spoken with none of the inhabitants of the Villa, except Herr Sonnenkamp.

"If I am not much mistaken," said the doctor, "Countess Bella will henceforth feel an especial sympathy with the bold Herr Sonnenkamp. It corresponds with her nature, which defies the world and inclines to whatever is exceptional and extreme."

The Professorin, although Bella had deeply wounded her, endeavored to correct the doctor's opinion.

Eric was silent; he was amazed at the

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persistency with which the physician pursued and explained the Countess's peculiar nature.

The Doctor sent to ask Sonnenkamp whether he wished to speak with him. The reply was, that he would like to have him first visit Frau Ceres.

"How do I look?"

Sonnenkamp had put this question to Joseph, his valet, before rising; indeed, on first awaking.

"As usual, sir."

He asked for a hand-glass, then giving it again to the servant, lay back among the pillows with closed eyes. He must have had the strange idea that the emotions of the past night could be read upon his features. It was long ere he left his chamber. He had told Joseph that he wished to be alone. He heard the raking of the paths, outside, and the steps of men going to and fro. He would wait until the traces of devastation without were removed, as far as possible; he would wait until he was able to obliterate the traces left within him by this experience. He sat long alone; only his favorite dog was with him. His heavy head weighed him down like a cannon ball; yet he repeated to himself, —

"I must recover my composure; for I alone can help myself."

"Thou alone?" he asked again, and his thoughts passed to Bella. There is a woman such as he has never found before. There is courage, power, genius. But in what can even she help him? Nothing. No one.

Then, laying his hand on the dog's head, he thought: "Two bugbears are the worst enemies we have in the world, — fear before the deed, and repentance after it. With these quackeries we squander our existence. He alone is free who fears no future and rues no past."

"I will be free!" cried he.

"I am so within myself; but where will freedom be allowed me? I must go back to America. No, to Italy, to Paris, to new surroundings.

But the children, the children! They are filled with thoughts which take from them home and parents. Thy best course, after all, is to remain here, to despise mankind, whose hatred will gradually be blunted. Perhaps, too, there may be found some means of appeasing their wrath, which will have a penitent aspect. Was it the Professorin, or I myself, who spoke yesterday of a jury? That's the thing! Come on, World! I am myself again, and nothing else.

High above all these recent occurrences arose again in him the hatred of Crutius.

"How he is now rubbing his hands in his editorial office, where the little gas-jet burns! How he will rejoice at the signal-rocket which has roused the masses! How the riot will figure in the newspapers!"

He now rang, and, sending for Eric, reminded him how he had formerly publicly exalted the gratitude and good manners of the people. Now, he said with a laugh, he must also properly expose their misbehavior; he must, anticipating all other reports, describe the whole thing naturally as an extravagance inspired by the new and effervescent wine. At the close, he must add that Herr Sonnenkamp (for that was his name, lawfully derived from the maternal side of the house) would do something which should correct and satisfy public opinion.

He thought Eric pedantic, for wishing to know at once whether any thing was to be done.

What's the use?

We show the public something prospective; but it is not necessary that this should be brought to pass; men forget what has been promised them.

This he wished to say to Eric, but withheld it, merely telling him that he might let the whole thing alone if he chose.

Just as Eric had left the room, came the dog-keeper, exclaiming, —

"Oh, sir, she is poisoned!"

"Who is poisoned?"

"The good beastie, Nora; in the night, during the riot, the shameful men gave her something, apparently a toadstool roasted in grease. She is dying now."

"Where is she?"

"Before the kennel."

Sonnenkamp went with the keeper to the enclosure where the dogs were. There lay Nora, with her loosened chain beside her.

"Nora!" he cried.

The dog wagged its tail once more, raised its head, and blinked. Then the head fell, and she was dead.

The glance of the beast was piteous. Sonnenkamp seemed to wish to torture himself with gazing at her.

"Bury the dog before Roland sees her, he said at last.

"Where shall we bury her?"

Yonder, by the ash. But first skin her: the hide is worth something.

"No, sir, I cannot: I loved the dog too well to skin it."

"Very well. Then bury it skin and all."

He turned away and wandered about the garden; yet he could not refrain from returning to the spot where the dog was being buried.

"Yes," he said aloud to himself: "that's

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the way. The world gives us a toadstool roasted in fat. The world *is* a toadstool roasted in fat—palatable, but poisonous!"

He returned to the house.

The other dogs were howling quite frightfully, as though they knew that one of their comrades had departed.

CHAPTER II.

TWELVE MEN.

Pranken, who remained true to Sonnenkamp, was often full of solicitude. At times he looked very strangely at his friends, but did not give utterance to his projects. Sonnenkamp knew that something was going on. He knew through Lootz that Pranken had several times received letters with large seals, one bearing the seal of the Court-Marshal's office, another that of the Ministry of State. He would have liked to ask him whether negotiations were pending, with a view to the attainment of the longed-for dignity. He looked at him inquiringly; but Pranken remained reticent. Sonnenkamp even pressed him not to disdain his assistance, saying that he was wise in some things, even though he had acted imprudently.

Pranken said that there were things which he must decide for himself, and which he hoped to put through successfully. He hinted that the world, even the little world of the city, was made up of different factions.

As he condescended to say no more, Sonnenkamp resolved to have recourse to an old method, and one which could here be very easily employed. He would obtain by theft, through the agency of Lootz, the letters which Pranken had received. He rejected this course, however. Yet once, when Pranken had ridden in haste to the railway station, just after he had received another large letter, he went toward his room. He would have no go-between. He could surely get possession of the letters, and Pranken was no doubt careless enough to render unnecessary breaking open any locks or picking them.

In a sudden attack of loyalty, however, he turned away from the threshold.

Pranken returned, bringing the news that he was in danger; but earnestly begged to be excused from giving any particulars.

Sonnenkamp embraced the excited young man, and made him promise not to engage in any duel without his knowledge.

Reluctuantly Pranken gave him his hand upon this, and departed.

While Eric was yet at his mother's, Sonnenkamp came thither with a letter in his hand. He first expressed his joy at seeing the Professorin so full of new life; then, saying that he had a letter from her friend, he handed her one written by Professor Einsiedel, and added with a smile:

"These learned gentlemen have very good memories. I had forgotten having invited the man."

The Professorin read Einsiedel's letter, in which he said that he should not be lecturing next winter, and was ready to accept Sonnenkamp's invitation, and to take up his abode for some time at Villa Eden.

As the Professorin smilingly gave back the letter, a gleam of furtive triumph shot from Sonnenkamp's eyes. Then this new specimen of humanity, this puritanic infidel, has her own private affinity. Perhaps she felt the malicious glance; for she said, in a very decided manner, —

"I should be very glad to have the noble man come to us. His visit would be a great deal to me, and, perhaps, to others also. In the first place, I know of nothing better for Roland; for you, Eric, are so entirely accustomed to him, that you do not now offer him that support which he, perhaps, may need for a long time yet."

Sonnenkamp's countenance relaxed. It was nothing after all. This woman seemed in truth noble and pure; for she was not so prudent, no one could be so prudent, as to assume forthwith such a mask of virtue. He was not a little astonished, however, when Eric, with all sorts of excuses and pretexts, gave it as his opinion that it was not wise to transport the Professor's delicately organized nature at this time into their stormy life.

Just because Eric sought so earnestly to defend himself against such a suspicion, it became clearer to Sonnenkamp that he did not feel justified in bringing any new person into close relations with his family.

Inwardly chafing, but yet smiling with an excess of friendliness, he said that he would invite the Professor, and would leave him free to stay either at the green cottage or at the villa.

The mother gave her voice for the former.

Sonnenkamp nodded very approvingly. He summoned a servant, and ordered that no one should interrupt them. Then, addressing both, he said that he had something momentous to discuss with them; that it was a step which concerned his inmost soul, and which alone could make him wholly free.

Eric and his mother trembled. Did Sonnenkamp already know? He, meanwhile, seated himself calmly and began:

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"Noble lady, you have done a great thing for me, and now I commit into your hands, and your keeping, my fate and that of those who belong to me."

He made a pause and then proceeded:

"From out of the midst of the riot one thought has remained with me. It was of sudden birth; and now the question is, how to carry it out. Already on Sunday, when I was going to church, where the beggar insulted me, it was my intention"—

"Pray, do not forget what you were going to say," interposed the Professorin. "Permit me to interrupt you with a question."

"Go on. I am ready."

"Does the source of all your wealth lie in that?"

"No, not a sixth of it. Even my enemies know that."

"Then please proceed. You had begun, 'as you were going to church'"—

"Yes, then it was my intention, in spite of my unbelief, to confess to a priest. I acknowledge, Herr von Pranken was not without influence in this matter; but it originated, nevertheless, with me. This institution of the confession in our church is a grand thing. Offences for which no earthly judge can punish, for which no clause is to be found in the law, are blotted out; we are absolved from them by a man filled with the divine grace by consecration, sympathetic, considerate, who neither knows nor sees the penitent, yet who hears the breath of his quivering confession; who is so far from him, and yet so near!

The Mother looked down.

"Wonderful and ever new, how the man can speak of such acts!" she thought.

Sonnenkamp felt what the lady thought of him, and exclaimed,—

"Look me in the face! Yes, noble lady, you hindered the execution of my purpose."

"I?"

"Yes, you; for, thinking better of it, I said to myself that I would tell you all, gazing at your open face, and that you had the power to absolve and to blot out; but no, you, too, have it not."

The Professorin breathed more freely.

Sonnenkamp continued,—

"You once let fall the word—I know not whether you spoke it or I—but it was uttered, and so it stands. 'In the new world, where the laws are not yet so firmly established, they summon a jury of neighbors.' I wish to summon a jury of free men, before whom I will stand openly. They shall judge me freely. I wish to unite trial by jury with confession, and I vow to fulfil what these men shall enjoin upon me as a means of expiation. Having returned to Europe, I owe the European world either a deed of atonement, or else the endeavor to convert it. Do you comprehend my meaning?"

"Perfectly. There must be something redeeming, in submission to the verdict of an assemblage of freemen."

"I see that you understand me fully," said Sonnenkamp with great serenity. "And now give me your advice. Whom do you propose as members of this moral jury, as we may call it? In the first place, I must refuse Herr von Pranken. He is my son, and cannot be my judge."

"I should not be able to name any one without reflection. Please— I am yet too weak. This deliberation, this seeking, this thought-travelling, causes me physical pain."

"Then calm yourself. Herr Dournay, you have heard all— Have you, though?" he repeated, on observing Eric's abstracted glance.

"Yes, indeed, every thing."

"And now, whom would you propose?"

"First of all, the most sensible of men has to-day himself announced his arrival."

"Well, well, I accept him. And then?"

"Herr Weidmann."

"Weidmann? He is the uncle of my most bitter enemy."

"But on that very account he will be just."

"He was an abettor in the production of Herr Crutius' newspaper article."

"From that imputation he is cleared. He charged Prince Valerian expressly to tell you that he disapproved of Herr Crutius' conduct throughout."

"And even if Herr Weidmann were your enemy," put in the Professorin: "it is just your enemies whom you must seek to conciliate."

"You are a wonderful woman: you shall have your way. You shall see how thoroughly in earnest I am. So, then, Herr Weidmann; and who else?"

"Count Wolfsgarten."

"Accepted without opposition. Go on!"

"The Justice."

"Also accepted."

"Then I should like to plead for a man whom you, perhaps"—

"Only speak out plainly. Who is it?" cried Sonnerkamp impatiently.

"The field-guard."

"The field-guard?" laughed Sonnenkamp. "For all I care! And I give you the Doctor at once, into the bargain. But now, Herr Dournay, set about it at once: the business must be begun immediately."

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"Who will remain with Roland meanwhile?" Eric would have asked, but restrained himself, in obedience to a sign from his mother, who seemed to have divined the question he would fain have asked. She nodded. "You can leave Roland and Manna to me," she seemed to say.

"You have entirely forgotten our good Major," she said aloud, in a cheerful tone.

"Because he is understood as a matter of course, and also the Priest," replied Sonnenkamp.

Eric named, besides, Prince Valerian, the Banker, and Knopf. The number was full.

Sonnenkamp urged that not an hour should be lost, and Eric ordered a horse saddled.

CHAPTER III.

THE HAND OF RECONCILIATION IS NOT GRASPED.

BEFORE Eric started, Manna came to him, saying that she must immediately go to the convent; that she thought it her duty, above all, to confess the truth there, and that she did not wish to postpone any thing so difficult, but to undertake it at once.

Eric was perplexed. Why should Manna wish to re-enter the convent? He soon recognized in this desire, however, the impulse to do something, not to remain in inactivity; and, moreover, the manner in which she sought to sever the old ties in peace was thoroughly noble: so he merely said, —

"Only do not forget that you are no longer justified in imposing castigations and mortifications upon yourself, or in allowing them to be enjoined upon you by others; for you no longer belong to yourself, Manna, you are mine: you must neither torture my Manna, nor allow others to torture her."

Manna looked at him with beaming eyes, and from out of all her tribulation sounded a serene voice, as she said, —

"It was through you, Eric, that I came to this resolution."

"Through me?"

"Yes. You told me how much good it did you, when one of your comrades, after you had taken leave of him, came to you and said, 'Do not think hardly of me if I ignore you. You could not do otherwise; and I neither can nor dare do otherwise.' I am going to imitate you and your comrade. The souls of those in the convent shall not be burdened with my desertion, which they must consider as apostasy."

Manna wished that Aunt Claudine should accompany her; but Eric thought it more fitting that she should travel with Roland. The brother and sister would thus be alone together, out in the world; and Roland would have to protect his sister, to render her services which would lift him out of his state of dead dejection, out of his heavy, monotonous sorrow.

"You can scarcely imagine how happy it makes me to let you command me," said Manna, as Eric arranged every thing.

Roland agreed at once.

"But you must ask your parents' leave," was the next order; and the children felt painfully that this was but a form: every thing was torn asunder and rent to shreds; all obedience and all dependence.

"Manna, now is the time," said Roland, in great agitation.

"For what?"

"You ask father; perhaps he will tell you whether we have no blood-relations in Europe. Whoever they may be, they ought to come to us now. It is hard enough that we have never troubled ourselves about them."

Manna looked imploringly up to Eric, who, rightly discerning in the youth the instinctive longing for family ties, begged them to abstain from urging the matter for the present, saying that the time for it would come by and by.

Manna went to her father, and said that she wished to go to the convent.

Sonnenkamp was alarmed, but quickly regained his composure on Manna's adding that she went thither for the last time, in order to bid farewell forever, as she had decided never to become a nun.

In spite of all its distortion, a gleam of triumphant satisfaction lighted up Sonnenkamp's face.

"Do you see at last? They knew — I now have certain evidence that they knew—what money, and in what manner earned, you brought them. Did they ever say a word to you about being unable to accept it?"

Manna avoided this view of the question. She would gladly have confessed all to her father at once, but had not yet the courage. Moreover, she had promised Eric to follow his guidance implicitly.

The weather was foggy and cold, as the brother and sister, and Fräulein Perini, went down the river: yet the journey refreshed them, for Roland said after a short time, —

"Ah! There *is* a world outside after all!"

Towards noon, the sun pierced through the mist, which melted away, and every thing became suddenly bright. The vessel steamed

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down the stream, shooting rapidly along over the clear water, between the sun-illumined mountains, on which, here and there, harvests were still being gathered.

The passengers stood or walked on deck, enjoying the wide prospect; but below in the cabin, lay Manna, with closed eyes, not heeding Fräulein Perini's injunction to come up and refresh herself with the view and the free air, only begging to be left alone. And so she lay and thought, half dreaming, half awake, of all that had happened to her and hers. How utterly different it was when she went up the river, with Roland, last spring! Eric's warning came into her mind, how wealth, and the ease with which it enables one to make disposition of external means and of those who serve, seduce us into healing ourselves with amusements and outward remedies.

This reproach did not now trouble her: she only wished to part peacefully from a Past, under obligations contracted in her soul to the friendly souls there, which she wished to fulfil, even though outwardly separating herself from them. Her soul lay bound by obligations to the women yonder: she wanted to take care to be truly comprehended, even though she was outwardly cutting herself off from them.

The difference of faith between Eric and herself again arose before her. But what course remained to her? To become untrue there to the pious sisters, or here to Eric; but no, that was no longer possible. She hoped that the great soul of the Superior would give her calmness; and thus she lay, sunk in a half-slumber during the whole trip.

On deck, Fräulein Perini was glad, on the whole, that Manna had remained unseen; for here and there among the passengers Sonnenkamp was mentioned, and the report was, that the Prince's negro had lifted him up with both hands, and had carried him, struggling, down the staircase, until he was set at liberty by the servants, who brought him to the carriage. An agent, whom Fräulein Perini knew, was already wondering who would buy the Villa, for it was absolutely certain that the man would not remain there.

In the forward cabin, where Lootz had ensconced himself, he was obliged to hear the fruiterers who were carrying to the Lower Rhine the fruit which they had brought from Sonnenkamp's head-gardener, saying one to another, that they would not be willing to take a mouthful of fruit cultivated by this man. They granted him the merit, however, of having done much toward the introduction of a species of apples which grew easily and bore well.

At the last stopping-place but one before the Island Cloister, two black-robed nuns came on board. Fräulein Perini, who knew one of them, went down with them into the cabin where Manna was sleeping. Both nuns placed themselves opposite to her, took out their prayer-books, and prayed for the poor soul lying there in the sleep of sorrow.

Manna opened her eyes and gazed around in astonishment. She knew not where she was. One of the nuns — it was the shy one, who always kept in the background — welcomed her in the French language, and bade her comfortingly, resign herself to all that she must endure.

Manna sat up. So, then, the news had already reached even their ears! She went on deck with Roland and the three ladies. The Island cloister came into view. Every thing was so clear and bright, that she felt as though she had now suddenly returned to earth. There was every thing, just as it used to be, seeming to look at her with the question, "Where hast thou been this long time?"

They got into the boat, and were rowed toward the island. Every tree, every bench, every shrub, greeted her like a long-vanished Past. She cast a melancholy glance at the beautiful round seat on the landing-place, where she had so often sat with Heimchen. Now wet leaves lay upon the bench.

They reached the convent.

Manna sent her name at once to the Superior, but received the answer that she must first remain an hour in the church, and then come to her.

Manna understood what this meant; but did the Superior, then, already know of her defection? She went towards the church, but remained standing at the door, without entering. She feared the picture within, knowing that she could not do otherwise than raise her eyes towards it, and yet that must not be. She turned round again, and went out towards the park. She heard the children in the house playing together; she heard singing in another class; she knew how all were sitting; she knew every bench; approaching the fir-tree where she had so often sat, she saw that the seat was no longer there. On the kneeling-stool where Heimchen used to sit, lay withered leaves. "To Heimchen," said a voice within her. Turning back, it seemed to her, in passing the convent, as though she were guilty of rebellion and sin in not having obeyed the Superior's command. She came into the

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churchyard. On Heimchen's grave stood a cross with this inscription in golden letters: —

"The child is not dead, but sleepeth." — Mark v. 39.

"How?" cried Manna. "Why these words here? They are spoken in Scripture of that child who was re-awakened on its death-bed, but not of a buried one."

She sank down upon the grave, and her thoughts grew confused: she lost all consciousness of the passage of time. At last, composing herself, she turned back toward the convent. Admitted into the reception-room, she was still obliged to wait alone; the pictures on the wall seeming to withdraw into the distance if she looked up at them.

At last came the Superior. Manna, hastening toward her, would have thrown herself upon her neck; but she stood rigid, winding both ends of her hempen girdle around the forefingers of her right and left hand, so that the rope cut into the flesh.

Manna sank down at her feet.

"Rise," said the Superior severely. "We suffer no vehemence here. It is to be hoped you yet remember this. Have you been in the church?"

"No," said Manna, rising.

It was long ere the Superior spoke. She probably expected Manna to acknowledge her transgression; but Manna could not utter a sound. Every thing that she had experienced, and that was now within her, seemed to crowd upon her at once.

"I came hither," she began at last, "in order to leave no sorrow in your heart, Reverend mother, at my ingratitude. Your treatment of me has been most noble: you have" —

"No praise. Nothing about me. Speak of yourself."

"My memory must not be a grief to you. I came to beseech you" —

"Why do you hesitate so long? Speak out! What do you wish?"

"Nothing save your faith in the honorable struggle through which I have passed. I could not do otherwise. I am betrothed to Eric Dournay."

"How, to whom? Did I rightly understand you? Is Herr von Pranken dead? You are — But no. Speak!"

Faithfully and openly did Manna acquaint her with all that had happened, standing erect, and speaking in a firm voice. When she had ended, the Superior said, —

"So you have not come to do penance?"

"No."

"For what, then?"

Manna, grasping her brow, said, —

"Have I then not clearly confessed that I do not feel myself culpable? I came in order to offer you thanks, heartfelt thanks, for the good which you did me in time of need, and my memory must not be a sorrow to you. You yourself once told me that the battle which I must fight with life would be a hard one. I have not sustained it, or rather — only, I implore you, be not wounded. Grant me a peaceful resting-place in your memory."

"Do you wish that, even now? Yes, that is the way with the children of this world. Even the suicides demand a consecrated grave. You are dead, and can have no grave in our holy ground. You stretch out your hand for reconciliation, but of what sort? Your hand is not clasped."

A lay sister entered, bearing a request from Fräulein Perini to be admitted into the presence of the Superior and Manna.

She entered.

"Have you any thing to say?" asked the Superior, turning towards Fräulein Perini.

"Yes. Here stands Fräulein Manna. I remind her before you, worthy mother, of a sacred promise which Fräulein Manna obtained from me."

"A promise? From you?

"Yes. You, Fräulein Manna, extorted from me a promise to hold you fast with all manner of punishments and of bonds, if the spirit of apostasy should ever gain a foothold in your soul. Did you not, Manna?"

"I did."

"And now?" asked the Superior.

"Now I belong to myself no longer. I no longer call any thing my own: no possession, not even myself. I cannot give in expiation what is not mine."

The three women stood long in silence. Finally the Superior said, —

"Have you confessed to the Priest?"

"No."

The Superior had turned away, and spoke with averted face: —

"We force you not. We bind you not. We could; but we do not wish to. Go, go! I will see your face no more! Go! Alas, what a hell you bear within you! The trace of your footsteps here shall disappear. No, I will hear nothing more. Go! Has she gone? Do not answer me. Dear Perini, tell me — is she gone?"

"She is going," replied Fräulein Perini.

"Where is my sister?" they suddenly heard Roland's loud voice saying.

The door was thrown violently open.

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Roland, quickly perceiving what had been going on, cried, —

"You have humiliated yourself sufficiently: come with me." He seized Manna by the hand, and left the convent with her.

When they were in the open air, Roland said he had been unable to endure the suspense any longer. He had feared lest Manna would allow herself to be maltreated, enduring unkindness as a penance.

"And that you must not do, even if you could bear it yourself, for Eric's sake. You must not allow Eric's betrothed to be insulted and abused."

How Manna's eyes shone as she gazed into Roland's glowing countenance!

"It is over," she said. "A whole world is swallowed up behind me. It is well that it is over."

Fräulein Perini remained some time longer with the Superior, then followed Manna. Sitting beside her in the boat, she said in a peculiar low whisper, —

"I was obliged to say that. I could not do otherwise."

Manna held out her hand, saying, —

"You only did your duty. I am not angry with you. Forgive me."

Manna knew not how she had left the convent. Only when she embraced Roland did her tears begin to fall. On their homeward journey she did not go below, but sat on the deck beside Roland, looking at the landscape with her great black eyes wide open.

CHAPTER IV.

TRANQUILLITY ON THE ROAD, AND UNREST AT HOME.

On his way to Mattenheim, Eric met the Major. He felt cheerful enough to tell him that he was scouring the country as if enlisting a corps of firemen; and, when he explained the meaning of his words, the Major needed no urging to agree to his part. He looked on the affair in the light of a court of honor, from which no one should shrink.

"Poor man! Poor man!" he repeated, over and over again, "He was not open with me; but then, neither was she. I do not take it ill of him. She was not so either: it was the first time in her life. She" — this was of course, Fräulein Milch — "knew that I could not endure it. I can do much, comrade: you would not believe how much I can do. But there is one thing of which I am incapable; and that is hypocrisy. I cannot have friendly intercourse with a man whom I neither love nor esteem. I knew that the man had been a slaveholder; and I have always said that no one who associates with poodles can keep off the fleas: and who would believe that the man could utter so many kindly words? And with you, comrade, he talked like a sage, like a saint. I, with my dull brains, cannot make out, and even Herr Weidmann could not help me, why the good children must suffer all this. But now I will explain it to you. Now I know the reason. It came into my head on the road. This is how it is. I have not learned much. I used to be a drummer: I'll tell you my story some time."

"Yes; but what have you discovered?"

"Just so she always reminds me when I wander off from what I was saying. This is it. You see, man, as it says in Scripture, is born in pain, trouble; and the human soul is also born in pain, want, and misery. We poor fellows know that; and that is why rich and distinguished people are not fairly in the world. I mean — you know — and now our Roland is born anew, into true nobility, for the first time. The Prince can ennoble the name, but not the soul, you understand; so it is. And our Roland is now the real nobleman. To endure evil and do good, that is the motto which he has now received; and that is a device which has yet been engraved upon no knightly shield: but you see it stands written within, and there it will remain."

The Major pointed to his heart with a trembling hand. Eric listened in astonishment, as this timid man, so slow of speech, uttered all this, with many interruptions, it is true, but with great fervor; and now the Major reminded him how they had tormented themselves with the problem of what Roland should do with so much money, and said that it was now decided, once for all, he must do nothing but good with it.

When, at last, Eric was about to separate from the Major, the latter held him fast once again, saying, —

"Listen only to this one thing more. I was a drummer: I'll tell you the story some day. I became an officer; and my comrades did not dream how they honored me, when they used secretly, thinking I did not hear it, to call me Capt. Drumsticks, or, for shortness, even Sticks. Yes: they did honor to the Capt. Sticks; for, from that time forward, it became clear to me. I was unable to explain it so to myself, but she made me understand: she knows every thing. Yes: so it is. He is only half alive whom Fortune has made into something. Misfortune is the Holy Spirit, saying to man-

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kind, 'Arise and walk.' You understand me?"

"Yes," said Eric earnestly, pressing the old man's valiant hand and riding on.

Looking back, he saw the veteran still standing on the same spot. He nodded to the horseman, as though he would have said to him, in the distance, Yes: to you I have given good baggage, — my best. You will not lose it; and now, if I die, it is in the possession of one who will keep it, and not give it away. He thanked the Builder of all the worlds, that he had caused him to pass through so much that was hard, and yet always to come out of it unharmed.

Meanwhile, Eric was riding cheerfully towards Mattenheim. On the way, however, he turned round. It seemed to him that he was bound in honor to summon Clodwig first. That in forming this resolution he was also influenced by an impulse of curiosity as to how Bella was now behaving, he frankly acknowledged to himself: nevertheless, he rode first to Wolfsgarten.

The parrot shrieked from the open window, as though wishing to inform all the inhabitants of the arrival of so unusual a guest; for it was long since Eric had been there. He thought he had discerned the form of Bella in the room adjoining that at whose open window the parrot hung; but she did not show herself again.

Entering Clodwig's room, he found him, for the first time, in a state of despondency. He must also have had some bodily ailment; since he did not rise, as had always been his wont, greeting his young friend with as much formality as heartiness.

"I knew that you would come to me," said Clodwig, breathing hard, but speaking in a mild voice.

"If one spirit can influence another at a distance, you and your mother must have felt most clearly that I was with you at this time. And now, if you please, let us talk very quietly, as I am somewhat indisposed. Let us forget, first of all, that we are starved by intercourse with that man. I think we ought, in this case, to think of him, and not of ourselves. See," — taking up a phial, — "look at this. I take a childish delight in this new chemical stuff, which looks exactly like clear water, and yet serves to efface a written word without scratching the paper at at all; and now I am thinking, ought we not to be able to find some moral agency similar to this?"

Eric, seeing the matter which he had in hand immediately referred to, laid the plan of the jury before Clodwig, and called upon him to bear his part in it. Clodwig declined, with the remark that Herr Sonnenkamp, or whatever his name was, must have a court of his peers, — men of similar rank, or, rather, of a similar profession with himself. He, for his part, was no peer of Herr Sonnenkamp, or whatever he called himself.

Eric reminded his friend, with great caution, of his having dwelt on the equality of privileges at Heilingthal; but Clodwig seemed to give no heed to these words.

There must have been a great weight on the soul of this man, usually so attentive; for, without noticing Eric's reminder, he related how much he had exerted himself in these latter days for the American, some hot heads at court having wished to summon him before a tribunal on a charge of high treason. This idea had been very repulsive to the Prince, who had written Clodwig a etter with his own hand, thanking him for lhaving given his counsel against any elevation to the ranks of the nobility. Clodwig had thereupon advised the Prince to desist from any further proceedings against the man, who, he said, had been allured and seduced into things with which he should have nothing to do.

Again Eric expressed his wish that Clodwig would assist at the trial.

He merely replied, —

"I will inform the Court that the man summons a tribunal of his own accord. It will have a good effect there; and to oblige you" — here he sat upright, and his expression of languor changed to one of resolution. He passed his hand over his whole face, as though feeling that he must wipe away its look of distress — "yes, on your account, in the belief that your connection with that house may be, by this means, severed, or that light may be thrown upon it, I do not shrink from the appeal."

It was hard to Eric that this consent should be given for his sake, and not with a view to serving the cause. He was on the point of announcing his intention of becoming the man's son, when approaching footsteps were heard. Clodwig rose hastily, and, seizing Eric's hand, said, in a low but decided voice, —

"Well, I yield. The man wishes a court of honor: he shall have one."

Clodwig had uttered these words quickly and precipitately, for at that moment Bella entered.

She greeted Eric with Latin words; and it was with a strange confusion of sensations that he perceived in her a sudden defiance, utterly out of keeping with the present state of things, and, above all, with Clodwig's dejected mood.

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"Pray tell me," she asked, "did you ever pass through a phase in which you admired men of force, like Ezzelin von Romano? There is, after all, something great in such violent natures, especially when contrasted with men of petty interests and weak dilettanteism" —

Eric could not understand what this meant. It did not occur to him that Bella, screened by the presence of a stranger, was discharging arrows, none of which missed their mark.

Clodwig gently closed his eyes, nodded, and then opened them again.

"Oh, yes," she continued, more calmly, "I am glad that I remember a question which I wished to put to you. Tell me, what would Cicero or Socrates have said, on reading Lord Byron's 'Cain'?"

Eric looked at her with a puzzled air. This question was so extravagantly odd, that he did not know whether it was intended as a sneer, or whether she was insane. Bella, however, went on: —

"Has Roland ever yet read Byron's 'Cain'?"

"I believe not."

"Give him the book now. It must have an effect upon him. He, too, is a son, who has a right to revolt at his father's banishment from Eden. It is wonderful, the correspondence between the two stories, — is it not? Do you know that we are all, strictly speaking, children of Cain? Abel was childless; yes, the pious Abel had no children: we are all descended from Cain. A grand pedigree! One more question, dear Herr Doctor. Have you never got cut of the *savants* the form and color of the mark branded on Cain's brow by God the Father?"

"I do not understand you," Eric answered.

"Neither do I understand myself," laughed Bella. It was a dismal laugh.

She then continued: —

"I began to read Cicero, 'De Summo Bono,' with the help of a translation, of course; but I did not get far, and took up Byron's 'Cain,' instead: that is the finest thing the modern world has produced."

Eric still knew not what to reply, and only gazed into the faces of Bella and Clodwig. "What is going on here?" he said to himself.

Bella began again, —

"Were not the female slaves who served the Roman ladies obliged to puff out their cheeks, when a noble matron wished to strike them in the face? *A propos*, how is Fräulein Sonnenkamp?"

"She has gone to the convent," replied Eric with downcast eyes.

It oppressed him to be obliged to answer Bella's questions with regard to Manna.

"That seems to me very sensible," was the rejoinder.

"Such a cloister is a shelter where the sensitive child will best find repose until the storm is past. What will Roland now do? What are your intentions, and those of your mother?"

These questions were put in a manner so superficial, so distant, and so conventional, that Eric was able to reply with a certain degree of cheerfulness, —

"In the interim, we have recourse to the great deed which is so universal."

"The great deed?"

"Yes: in the mean time, we are doing nothing."

In the midst of this conversation, Eric's thoughts were in the convent with Manna. There she, too, was now confronting people who had once been such near friends to her. How did they now appear in their new character of enemies and antagonists? Surely they had not assumed this cold, indifferent tone. He felt as though he must stretch out his hand protectingly over Manna, who was now bearing crushing reproaches, and, perhaps, even allowing a penance to be laid upon herself. He grieved that he had let her travel alone with Roland and Fräulein Perini. He felt that he ought not to have left her.

Such was his absorbing thought; and so he absently took leave, saying that he must go on to Weidmann's. Again he rode through the wood which he had traversed on Clodwig's horse the first time that he went to Villa Eden. How utterly different was the Villa to-day! And here at Wolfsgarten, — here he felt that there was some mystery which he could not unravel. How extremely happy had Bella and Clodwig then seemed to him! and now, what were they? Bella's strange, wandering talk, jumbling together Cicero and Byron's 'Cain,' showed that she must have passed hours in dragging herself restlessly through all sorts of things. Then Clodwig seemed overwhelmed by melancholy from which even his universal kindness could only temporarily rouse him.

Eric felt that he must forget all this, since he had in view an end which he must pursue for others and himself, — more than for himself, for Manna. Only he who is personally free from care can devote himself fully and freely to the service of others.

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CHAPTER V.

ACQUIESCENCE AND RELUCTANCE.

It was already night when Eric reached Mattenheim. The Weidmann family had entered their winter residence, as they called the beautiful, bright rooms on the upper story of their house, with pictures on the walls, and open fires burning on the tasteful hearths.

Frau Weidmann was sitting with her daughter-in-law behind the table on which stood the lamp, while her son was reading aloud. Herr Weidmann was in his study.

Eric begged leave to seek him there, and found him among the alembics and retorts of his laboratory.

"I cannot shake hands," cried he gayly; "but, first of all, turn your mind from the weight which oppresses you. That will help matters. You see you find me in a cheerful mood. We are trying to profit by a new discovery. We have found that a new sort of printer's ink can be prepared from the skins and grounds of grapes. The matter promises well, and our friend Knopf is probably already writing a poem on this subject. He wishes, that, in future, all lyrics, but especially drinking songs, should be printed only with ink prepared in this manner. Look, here is the new stuff boiling. But you had better wait in the next room, where you will find some very interesting newspapers. Wait a little while, and I will be with you."

Eric, going into the adjoining apartment, found the table strewn with American newspapers, containing accounts of violent election struggles between the Republicans and the Democrats. The latter name had been assumed by those who wished to enforce State rights so far as to be incompatible with the existing Union; their true and chief object being the preservation of slavery.

On the other hand, the Republican party was united in the name and spirit of Abraham Lincoln.

"In these days in which we live," thought Eric, "the great cause is being decided in the New World. In what state of mind is Sonnenkamp awaiting the result of this struggle?" He read on without knowing what he read.

Weidmann came in, saying that he had expected Eric, and asked how Sonnenkamp's children had endured the publicity of this affair. He declared his readiness to serve, as soon as Eric had explained to him the plan of the jury. He added, that he could not as yet foresee any permanent result that could come from it, but that at least a clearer insight into the matter would be obtained by this means, and, perhaps, the power of putting the children in the position due to them.

Weidmann was the first person out of the family, with the exception of the Major, to whom Eric communicated his connection with Manna. He was not in the least surprised, having looked upon this relationship as inevitable, from all that he had heard of Manna, in connection with what he knew of Eric. He even added, that it was on Eric's account that he had instantly acquiesced in the plan proposed, knowing how nearly the restoration of the honor of the house, in such measure as was possible, must concern him, and feeling that it was the duty of his friends to stand by him.

"Oh, I was so proud of my integrity!" lamented Eric; "and now"—

"You may remain so," interrupted Weidmann; "and I can put your mind at ease on one point. It is certain that the greater part of the wealth of this man at Villa Eden was not gained through the slave-trade. That I know from my nephew."

"Pray, assure our Roland of that, first of all."

"I will. Send him to me as soon as possible."

He asked how it happened that Herr von Pranken continued to consider himself as the son of the house, clinging to this connection with inexplicable tenacity.

Eric could only say that he and Manna, in order not to cause more confusion at this juncture, had kept their affection a secret with the greatest care.

Weidmann urged that it should be made known before the trial; and Eric gave him his word that it should.

His friend then returned at once to the preparations for the jury, saying,—

"One other thing will be hard to arrange. I think that we ought to include the negro Adams."

Eric doubted whether Sonnenkamp would consent to this; but Weidmann repeated that the blacks had precisely the same right to judge the whites, as the latter had to judge them. Eric promised to propose this, but begged Weidmann, meanwhile, not to make his participation in the business dependent on this.

While they were sitting cheerfully at the table, came a new guest, the Doctor. He had been attending a patient in the neighborhood, and was in high spirits, having just performed a successful operation. Soon turning to Eric, he said,—

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"There you have an example. Oh, if we could only prescribe a sedative that would quiet for weeks or months!"

He told them about the man whom he had just left, adding, —

"See how much the fine doings of nobility and virtue signify. The man from whose estate I came is an illegitimate Royal son, and his children are already allied by marriage with the clan of high society. So, in twenty years, no one will ask whence came the wealth of our Roland."

When he had heard of the jury, and how his assistance was taken for granted, and as a fixed fact, he cried, —

"Yes! That is the way with the old tyrants! They love a mock burial. But you won't see me in the funeral-procession. Do you really believe that he will submit to your decree? His only object is to compromise other men. He is deceiving you all; and you, dear Dournay, have interfered enough on this man's behalf. I advise you to leave matters as they are. You are trying to help a negro, no, a negro-dealer, to wash himself white."

The Doctor, as he proclaimed his opinion, gave his jolly laugh, which no one could hear without laughing too.

"The fellow would be quite to my taste," he went on; "he would have been a good, healthy scoundrel of the old sort, only that rascals nowadays, alas! are all so reflective, so self-conscious. They are not satisfied to act as one of Nature's elementary forces, but they are constantly making outrageous attempts at logical self-justification. If this Herr Sonnenkamp really wished to change himself, it would be despicable cowardice."

"Cowardice?" interrupted Weidmann. "He who has not a good conscience can easily be overthrown, and has no persevering fortitude. He can be bold, he can be foolhardy; but temerity is not courage."

"Ho, ho!" interrupted the Doctor. "Have I not already told you that I have an aversion to all this sentimental fuss on behalf of the negroes? I have a natural repugnance for negroes. I don't see why my reason should brand such an innate physiological antipathy as a prejudice. It shows prejudice, moreover, to say that all prejudices are groundless. I could wish that we had more of such inborn dislikes, and that we did not permit so-called civilization to rob us of those which we have. The slave-trade is not a fine thing, it is true. If I had been a prince, I should, after all, have ennobled the man I should have said, 'Good friend, take a bath; but then be merry, and the Devil take orthodoxy!' The thing which vexes me most is, that this Professor Curtius has obliged the nobles by firing off his article beforehand. Could he not have waited a day longer? Then Sonnenkamp would have been one of the nobility, and they would have been obliged to swallow it as they could. Would not that have been much better?"

The Doctor seemed determined not to regard the matter in a serious light. When they were leaving, however, and he had insisted on Eric's sitting beside him in the carriage, and tying his horse on behind, he said, —

"As for the rest of it, I acquiesce, and, to tell you the truth, on account of your faith. You believe that the past can be atoned for by an effort of the will; and do you really believe this man will repent? Well, your faith shall remove me, the mountain of unbelief. We will see."

Eric told him that he had been at Wolfsgarten, and was not a little astonished when the Doctor said that the incongruity and want of harmony between Clodwig and Bella had reached a crisis.

"Bella," he said, "seeks a narcotic. She studies Latin, and, while smaller natures intoxicate themselves with brandy, she strives to stun herself with Lord Byron's poetry. I ought not to speak of Byron. I was once too much inspired by him, and now go to the other extreme. I consider this sort of writing to be not wine, but — But then, as I said, I am a heretic, and, indeed, a renegade heretic."

Seeing that Eric shrank back, he added, —

"You are horrified by my heresy; but then, it is only my individual opinion."

The Doctor was going on to abuse Bella again in his old way. Eric said involuntarily, how strange it seemed to him that the Doctor should be so imbittered against her, for whom he had once shown a preference.

"Ah, bravo!" cried the Doctor in a loud voice. "My respects! I admire that woman. So, then, she told you that I had once paid her my addresses? Excellent! A stroke of genius! I admire the adroitness with which she would fain have deprived my opinion of all weight in your eyes. What bunglers we men are! Shall I make you a solemn protestation? No. Do you believe me capable of the villany of speaking so of a woman whom I had loved, even for a minute, or liked even for a second? But I thank you. I am enriched by a goodly addition to my knowledge of humanity. I thank you. My conscience is soothed, for I have not judged this woman

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too harshly. Recall this day's ride to my mind at some future time. I tell you, that woman will yet earn some notoriety. How — what? That I cannot tell you; but such a wealth of inventive power will yet bring something to pass."

All this jarred on Eric's mood. Why must it come at such a time? Was there not a sufficient weight on his spirits? He scarcely heard the Doctor, as he went on to relate how hard a struggle Pranken had had with his noble connections, and to keep his place at court, owing to his refusal to renounce Sonnenkamp.

When they had reached the valley, Eric took leave of the Doctor, unfastened his horse, and rode back to the Villa.

In Sonnenkamp's room there was still a light. He sent for Eric, who informed him that all had agreed to the plan. He said not a word about Adams being proposed as a juryman.

"I thank you, I thank you heartily," said Sonnenkamp, who was seated in his arm-chair. His voice sounded like an old man's. "One thing more," he said, sitting upright. "Does the Countess Bella know of this?"

"I cannot say; but I do not doubt that the Count will inform her of it.

"Did she say nothing about me?"

"No."

"Nothing at all? Did she speak of no member of this household?"

"Oh! yes. Of the children."

"Indeed! Of the children? Well, I thank you. Pleasant dreams."

Eric went to his chamber. He stood long at the window, gazing out upon the landscape.

The reign of Nature continues through all human revolutions; and happy is he, who, in contemplation of this, can forget himself.

It was a dark night. A black, wide-spreading cloud hung over the mountains. Then a bright streak of light appeared on the edge of the ridge, and stood between the mountains and the cloud, which grew lighter. The moon rose, the black cloud ingulfed it, and now the light shone out on both sides, above and below; but the dark mass was darker than before, while detached masses of a leaden color floated on the right and left.

Eric closed his eyes, and lost himself in thought. When he looked up again, the moon was standing above the dark cloud, and the landscape was bathed in its light, which quivered on the stream. And again, after a time, the moon was hidden by another cloud. Eric looked out long and fixedly, till the cloud had vanished. The whole sky was as clear and bright as steel undimmed by a breath; and peacefully shone the mild sphere of light, high in heaven.

Nature, fixed on firm foundations, works on according to eternal laws. Must it not be so too with human life?

Eric thought of Manna, and with the thought a soft light was spread over every thing, like the radiance now diffused from on high.

CHAPTER VI.

THE BROKEN-OFF TWIG.

While Sonnenkamp was carrying on the arrangements for the trial by jury, Pranken returned looking ill; and, on Sonnenkamp's urging him to tell him what was the matter, he drew forth the letters from his pocket.

He first laid before him the one in which he had been notified by the marshal of the Prince's household, that it was impossible for him, as chamberlain to his Highness, to retain any connection with a man who had not only forfeited his honor, but had behaved so wrongly towards the Prince, that the question was still being agitated whether he should not be openly arraigned on a charge of high treason.

Sonnenkamp trembled, but laughed at the same time, in a way peculiar to himself.

"Let me see the letter again," said he.

He read it; then, giving it back in silence, asked what the other letter contained.

Pranken said it was yet more decided; and handed him the document of the military court of honor, calling upon him to give up all intercourse with Sonnenkamp.

"And what do you intend to do?" asked Sonnenkamp. "I release you."

"I shall stand by you," replied Pranken.

Sonnenkamp embraced him. There was a pause, a strange silence between these two men.

"I defy them all," exclaimed Pranken; "but here is another letter. It is for you," giving him the letter of the Cabinetsrath.

Sonnenkamp read it.

The document was drawn up in very polite terms, and contained the request that he would travel for a time, until an opportunity should offer for putting down the party which was now urging his indictment before a court on a charge of treason.

"Do you know the purport of this letter?" he asked.

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"Certainly. The Herr Cabinetsrath chose to give it to me unsealed."

"And what do you advise?"

"I second his request."

A convulsive twitching passed over Sonnenkamp's face.

"Prudent, very prudent," he said to himself. "You wish to banish me, and retain my estate."

A horror began to creep over him as he saw a vision of himself seated in prison; but he drove it off.

"So you are of the same opinion?"

"Yes. But, before you leave for any length of time, allow me to point out a means by which you may earn new honors for us both."

"Is there such a means?"

"Yes. I have already told you that there is another faction, quiet but powerful, which is ours, and we, or, rather, you, have the means of binding it to you yet more closely."

And now Pranken told how he had promised to be present, almost immediately, at a council held by the nobles of this ecclesiastical province (which extended beyond the limits of the principality), in the archiepiscopal palace. The proceedings of this convocation were to be strictly confidential. Its object was to confer on the ways and means of rendering the Pope military assistance.

"You do not intend entering the papal army?" asked Sonnenkamp.

"I would, if I were not bound by the ties of duty, of honor, of love, to remain here at my post."

"That is fine, very fine. Excuse my interruption. And why do you impart this to me? I am not of the nobility, and have no place in this council."

"You belong to them, and will be present."

"I belong to them? I shall be present?"

"I will be brief. You will give a sum sufficient for the formation of a regiment, and I can assure you, I have security for your being not only unmolested, but crowned with honors."

"And, having given the money, can I remain here in honor?" Sonnenkamp said with a smile.

"It would be better, if you were absent for a time."

A look of exultation passed over the face of the questioner. This was better still, he thought. They wished to deprive him at once of a portion of his property, and to get rid of him, into the bargain. He looked at Pranken with an expression of great friendliness, and said,—

"Excellent! Does the priest of this parish know of this?"

"No. I have won over the Dean of the cathedral, though?"

"Will you allow me to send for the Priest?"

"Certainly, I will bring him myself."

"No! Remain here."

He gave through the speaking-tube an order that the Priest should be requested to come to him; then, turning again to Pranken, said, —

"And so you second the request? Most excellent! They sell blacks, buying whites instead, and the whites become snow-white. They even become saints."

"I do not understand you."

"Very likely. I am only pleased at the excellent arrangement of this world. My young friend, I believe that the thing called virtue is taught by means of a system in the Universities: they have a system of morality. We, my young friend, will work out a system of criminality. We will establish a chair in the University. Thousands of auditors will come flocking around us, whom we alone can instruct in the Truth, the real Truth. The world is magnificent! It must nominate me for the professorship of worldly wisdom, which is a science differing widely from the idea hitherto entertained of it. It is time that this moral rouge should be rubbed off. I know, thus far, but one human being whom I shall admit as my colleague into this faculty, and that one, alas! is a woman; but we must overcome this prejudice also. Magnificent!"

"You have not yet told me whether you accede to the plan"—

"Have I not? My young friend, you cannot yet become a professor. You are still a school-boy, learning the elements, the rudiments. I would fain found a new Rome, and, as once the Rome of Antiquity was peopled with a community of mere vagabonds, so I would fill my city from the houses of correction. No nation can equal their inhabitants. They are the really vigorous men."

"I do not understand you."

"You are right," said Sonnenkamp at last in a gentle tone. "We will be very upright and discreet, very moral and delicate. My young friend, I have something very different in view. The mouse-trap of your cathedral dean is too clumsy for me. I shall not snap at this bait cooked in lard."

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Pranken was full of wrath. Sonnenkamp's manner of treating him like a boy still in his school-jacket roused his indignation.

He stood up very straight, and looked down at himself from head to foot, to see whether he were indeed a little boy. At last he said, throwing back his head, —

"Respected father, I beg you to desist from this pleasantry."

"Pleasantry?"

"Yes. I have united myself to you — you cannot deny it — with a loyalty that — I have wished to make you my equal in — no, I did not mean to say that at such a time — only I must beseech you not to withhold your concurrence from this project. We have obligations. We have great obligations; and I demand that you should" —

"Why do you hesitate? Obey! Pray say the word. Yes, my noble young friend, I will obey you. It is fine, very fine. What uniform have you chosen? Shall we raise a regiment of cavalry or of infantry? Of course, we will make Roland an officer at once. Better say cavalry: he sits well on horseback. Look here, revered fanatic, I, too, have my fancy. We will ride over the Campagna. Ha! That is jolly! And we will have the best arms of the newest sort. I understand a little of that sort of thing. I have shipped many to America, — more than any of you know. What do you think of my raising the whole regiment in America?"

"That would be so much the better."

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Sonnenkamp. "A morning dream! They are said to be the sweetest. Haven't you slept almost enough? Haven't you dreamed out your dream?"

Pranken felt as though chains were being wound around and around him. His sensations were those of a man confined in a lion's cave. He must be gentle, yielding, conciliatory. He dares not rouse the lion. He must allow the brute to play with him, expecting every instant to be torn to pieces by his claws. Oh for some means of escape!

Pranken put his hand to his head. What manner of man was this? What did he want of him?

Sonnenkamp said, with his hand on the young man's shoulder, —

"I have nothing against your piety or your pious acts. It is to me a matter of indifference; but, my young friend, none of my money shall be thrown to those cowled fellows. Fine economy, that! Manna builds a convent; you raise a regiment. And is it for this that I have undergone so much? No, you were only joking; were you not? And now let us say no more about it. Be shrewd, and deceive those who think themselves the most so. You will find that the daintiest morsel. Ah! There is Manna coming into the court! We will call her here instantly.

He called through the speaking-tube that Manna was to come to him at once.

Before Pranken had time to say any thing, the door was opened without a knock, and Manna entered.

"You sent for me, father?"

"Yes. How did you get on at the convent?"

"I have taken leave of it forever."

"Thank you, my child, thank you. You do me good, and you know how much I need it now. So now let me arrange every thing on the spot. You look so fresh, so animated! I have never seen you so much so. Herr von Pranken," turning to him, "you see how Manna has freed herself, and I have your promise to give up the matter of which we have been speaking; have I not?"

Pranken made no answer.

"I did not know that you were here, Herr von Pranken," began Manna," but now, now it is best that it is so."

"Certainly," said Sonnenkamp decidedly. "You can have nothing to say to me which our faithful friend may not hear. Sit down."

He took, according to his wont, a little peg of wood, and began to whittle.

Manna did not sit down: with her hand on the back of a chair, she said, —

"Herr von Pranken, I wish to prove to you my gratitude for your faithful" —

"That you will, that you can," interrupted her father, looking up from his peg. "It is well. I need joy, I need rest, I need serenity. You are right. A cordial would now be doubly refreshing. Give our friend your hand now."

"I give it in farewell."

"In farewell?" cried Sonnenkamp, making a deep cut in the peg. He went up to Manna, and caught her hand.

"Pray, father," she interrupted. "Herr von Pranken, you are a nobleman whom I honor and esteem. You have proved yourself loyal to my father: as his child, I shall value you, and remember you with gratitude; but" —

"But what?" demanded Sonnenkamp.

"I owe it to you to speak the truth. I cannot become your wife. I love Herr

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Dournay, and he loves me. We are one; and no power of earth or heaven can part us."

"*You* and the teacher, that Huguenot, that word-huckster, that hypocrite? I will strangle him with my own hands, the thief"—

"Father," returned Manna, drawing herself up to her full height, while the heroic courage which shone from her eyes made her appear taller and stronger than she was in reality, — "father, Herr Dournay is a teacher and a Huguenot. It is only your anger that speaks the rest."

"My anger shall speak no more. You do not know me yet. I stake my life on this"—

"That you will not do, father. We children have enough to bear already."

A cry, horrible as that of some monster, burst from Sonnenkamp's breast.

Turning to Pranken, he cried, —

"Leave us! Herr von Pranken. Leave me alone with her!"

"No," was the reply. "I will not leave you alone with your daughter. I have loved her. I have a right to protect her."

Sonnenkamp supported himself by grasping the table. A vertigo seemed to seize him, and he cried, —

"Do you hear, Manna? Do you hear? And will you reject such a nobleman? Revoke your decision, my child; I will implore you on my knees. See, how perverted your mind is! I have enough to bear already. Do not heap this upon me, too. Look at this man! can you refuse such a one? Manna, you are a sensible, good child. You have only been playing with us; you have only wished to test us. See, you are smiling. I thank you, I thank you for this trial. By means of it, you have obtained a fresh proof of his nobleness. Manna, there he stands. Take him in your arms. I will gladly die; I will do whatever the world demands: only fulfil this one request."

"I cannot, father, I cannot."

"You can, and you will."

"Believe me, father"—

"Believe you?—you, who but lately declared with such firmness, 'I will become a nun!' The infirm of purpose cannot be trusted."

"Father, it pains me unspeakably to be obliged to wound you and Herr von Pranken thus."

"Well—it is well: I must bear this too. You can cut my heart out; for, alas! I have a heart. Fie! And is it for this that I have defied the world, old and new? is it for this that I am thrust out of both, — to call a hypocritical rascal my son? Oh these philosophers! these idealists! these humanitarian fanatics! He smuggles himself into my house as a tutor, in order to marry millions. Oh, most practical philosophers, and rascally liars and hypocrites, into the bargain! I will not bear it!"

He bent his fingers like claws, and moved his hands rapidly, crying, —

"Give me something to tear in pieces, or I do not know what I shall do. You"—

Pranken laid his hand on his shoulder. The three stood facing each other in silence. All breathed hard, but Pranken the hardest.

Manna endured her father's gaze calmly; but she had no foreboding of its real meaning. He again called through the speaking-tube, —

"Let Herr Dournay come here."

Then he went on.

"Manna, I do not force you; but I desire you to renounce this teacher. Yet more. Did you not tell me that you had sent word to the priest to come hither?"

"Certainly: you ordered that he should be summoned."

"I hear him in the ante-room. Admit him."

The Priest entered, and Sonnenkamp addressed him thus: —

"Sir priest, I announce to you, before these witnesses, my resolution to give my Villa for the foundation of a convent, provided my daughter Manna, here, takes the veil, as she has always wished to do."

Manna could not comprehend this. She could not suspect the cruel game which her father was playing with her, with Pranken, with Eric, with the Villa, with every thing. She knew not how to help herself, when, just as the Priest, turning toward her, offered his hand, Eric entered. He saw at once what had happened.

"Do you know who I am?" were the words with which Sonnenkamp turned upon him.

Eric bowed.

"And do you know who this man here is, and this girl? And when you look into that mirror, do you know whose image you see?"

Then, pointing to the wall where the hunting-whip hung, he cried, —

"And do you know what that is yonder? The back of many a slave"— He broke off suddenly.

Eric looked proudly around him, then said in a calm voice, —

"To be whipped by men of a certain sort is no dishonor."

Sonnenkamp gave a hollow groan, and Eric went on: —

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"I beseech thee, Manna, to leave the room."

"*Thee!* — *Manna!* —" yelled Sonnenkamp, and would have sprung upon him, had not Pranken caught his arm, saying, —

"Herr Sonnenkamp, if any one here is to demand satisfaction from Herr Dournay, I have the first right."

"Very good!" cried Sonnenkamp, throwing himself into a chair. "Yours is the revenge, yours the honor, yours the life, and yours every thing else. Speak yourself: I've nothing more to say."

"Herr Dournay," began Pranken, "I brought you into this family, and I told you in so many words what relation I held to the daughter. Up to this time, I have had a degree of respect for you; and I regret to be compelled to withdraw it."

Eric jumped up.

"I shall not challenge you to fight," Pranken continued. "You have put on a coat of mail that makes you invulnerable to me. Your life rests under Fräulein Manna's protection, and so your life is inviolable, as far as I am concerned. This is my last word to you so long as my tongue can speak. Herr Sonnenkamp, I have one request only to make of you. Give me your hand, promise to grant it to me."

"I promise you every thing but the regiment, every thing else but that."

"Very well: I have your word that you will not harm this man."

He felt about with trembling hands, and then taking out of his pocket a little book, he handed it to Manna. His voice was filled with emotion, as he said, —

"Fräulein Manna, you once gave this to me: the twig is still lying in it, and it is bare. Take it again. As this twig, broken off from the tree, can never grow to it again: so am I detached from you and from every one here."

He looked Manna full in the face, and then closed by saying, —

"Now we are parted forever."

He drew on his gloves quietly, buttoned them, took up his hat, bowed, and left the room.

Manna looked after him with a humble glance, and then seized Eric's hand. The two stood before Sonnenkamp, who had covered his face with his hand, and who now said, —

"Are you waiting for my blessing? To be horse-whipped by a man like me is no disgrace; and such a man as I am can give no blessing. Go, go! or have I no longer any right to command, that you remain so motionless?"

"Herr Sonnenkamp," Eric began, "I might say, and it would be to some extent true, that I intended those severe words for Herr von Pranken, and not for you; but, as they were also applicable to you, I ask your pardon. I was not master of myself. and it was wrong in me to provoke and grieve you so sorely; not merely because you are Manna's father, but because you are a man who has had to endure so much. It was sinful in me" —

"Very well, very well; I know all about sermonizing; it's sufficient. And has not your whole life been a lie? Have you not been a thief? Did I not ask you if you had any such views when I was conducting you over the house? And could you so long play the hypocrite and retail your fine speeches? Curse upon all faith in mankind! I had faith in you, I believed you incapable of a breach of trust; and you've been a hypocrite from that first hour I went with you over the house until the present moment. As to the future — I've torn away the mask."

"Herr Sonnenkamp," replied Eric, "I have wrestled long and desperately with myself, before yielding to this love; but it is stronger than I am, stronger than every thing besides. That I am not seeking for your wealth, I prove by declaring to you that I shall take none of your possessions. I can add no farther assurance; for if you do not believe my simple word, how are you to believe an oath?"

"Indeed? Then you expect still to be believed? Yes, fine, noble, good, magnanimous man, I possess a great deal, but not what you ask, — faith in you. I had this faith once, it was my last illusion. I don't swear it; but I know that it's my last illusion."

"I entreat Roland's father and Manna's father" — Eric's voice trembled, — "I entreat him, as a child, to be just towards me. You will yet learn that I spoke the truth at that time, and speak it now."

"Truth? Whew, truth! Leave me, I wish to be alone: I must be alone."

Eric and Manna left the room, holding each other by the hand. They waited outside for a long time. Joseph, who had been summoned, now entered Sonnenkamp's room. When he came out, he told Manna that Herr Sonnenkamp had sent to the city for a notary.

Eric and Manna went into the garden. And this is the power of love: in the midst of the most direful pain and suffering, they were inwardly cheerful as if all misery had been removed far away from them."

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"You must take it from me," said Manna, after they had walked together for a long time in silence. "I don't know what it signifies; but it will not leave me. At that time, when the Prince visited us, his kind message to you affected me as if he had bestowed a benefit upon myself. Do you remember? I delivered the message to you. At that time he said you were to remember that you had been the companion of his boyhood, and that he would like to prove to you that he was not forgetful of the fact. Now, don't you believe that you could do something for us? I don't know what; but I think — well, I don't know what I do think."

"It's the same with me," replied Eric. I remember it as if it were the present moment; but I have no idea how to begin to avail myself of this gracious favor. O Manna! that was the first time it broke upon me how you felt towards me."

And the lovers lost all idea of their anxieties in recalling the past, how they wanted to avoid each other, and could not. All present sorrow vanished away.

On Manna's face there was a light as of an inextinguishable gleam of sunshine: her large dark eyes glowed, for a free and strong soul shone through them.

"What are you smiling at now?" she suddenly asked Eric.

"Because an image has occurred to me."

"An image?"

"Yes. I've heard that a precious stone is distinguished from an imitation of one, by the fact that the dimness of lustre caused by breathing upon it immediately disappears. You, my Manna, you, are such a genuine pearl."

Whilst the lovers were promenading in the garden, Sonnenkamp sat alone, almost congratulating himself that he had something new to trouble him; and in the midst of his vexation there was a degree of pride, of pleasure, when he thought how courageously his child stood up there before him. She was his daughter, his proud, inflexible child. And his thoughts went further: Your child forsakes you, follows her own inclination, and your duty is done: your duty was to the daughter, for the son will build up an independent life. Frau Ceres — poh! — let them supply her with dresses and ornaments, and lull her to sleep with a pretty story. He went into the garden, into the green-house, where the black mould was lying in a heap. He put on his gray sack, grubbed in the dirt, smelt the fresh earth; but to-day there seemed to be no odor to it. He rent the garment in pieces as he took it off.

"Away forever!" he exclaimed. "Childish folly! It's all over!" He stood for a while before the spot where Eric had taken breakfast on the first morning. So this was the man, and he to be sole master here for the future? He to possess all this, — a schoolmaster?

The Cooper came along the road. Sonnenkamp called out to him, and commended his bringing up the fire-engine, adding, with a zest, that the settlers in the far West found this their best weapon against the savages, spurting hot water upon them; and it was still more effective to put in a trifle of sulphuric acid, and blind every one hit in the face. The cooper stared, with eyes and mouth wide open, at the man who could say these horrible things in such a free and easy way.

Sonnenkamp left him standing there, and, going into the orchard, helped very carefully and tenderly to gather the fruit. He thought of the days when this fruit was growing, of the spring when Roland was convalescent, of the visit of the Prince, the journey to the springs, the days of sunshine until now, the dewy nights; and he thought silently, when will there be another crop of fruit? how will it be with you then? where? perhaps under ground; then you cannot turn over the black mould: then his head swam.

It is a shame that we must die, and a double shame to know that we must.

He stared fixedly as if he were bewildered, for it came over him that on this very spot he had said something like this to Eric, the first morning he had come there. Has this place a peculiar power to awaken thoughts of death? Are you standing over the spot of earth which shall be your grave?

He was called away; for the notary with his two assistants had arrived just at the dinner hour. He sat down with him at the table, and appeared in as good spirits as if nothing had happened. The notary occupied Pranken's usual seat. After dinner, he transacted business with the notary, being long and busily engaged in writing. The two assistants signed as witnesses: so that nobody except those under oath knew any thing of the contents of the will.

After this was done, a letter came from Bella. She wrote to Sonnenkamp that she and Clodwig would come to the jury-trial, and he must bring it about that she should be among the twelve. Sonnenkamp smiled, for he had almost forgotten about it: it was all very well. Eric requestd Roland and Manna to accompany the Mother, who wanted to make a visit at Mattenheim. They consented, and so the house was now perfectly still, almost entirely deserted.

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CHAPTER VII.

PRELIMINARIES.

THE days passed away quiet and dull. Sonnenkamp sent off many letters, and read the newspapers, without sending them to Frau Ceres, as was his former custom.

The men came who had declared themselves ready to constitute the jury.

Sonnenkamp sent word to them that he would see no one until the time came for appearing before the tribunal. But an exception was made in regard to one person. Lootz was made the confidential agent, and Bella came to Sonnenkamp's room, through the climbing mistaria and the seed-room.

"Just a few words," Sonnenkamp said. "You could not form one of the jury; but I assure you, because such a being lives with me on the earth, I will live, and will yet show what constitutes a man. Here, in this room, will I speak."

He escorted her back through the seed-room: she knew that the door would be left open.

Bella went restlessly about the Villa, and she saw Lina who had come with her father, and who wanted to keep Manna company at this terrible time; but Lina was at a loss what to do with herself, when she found how the family was scattered.

She entreated Bella to go with her to Aunt Claudine, who was the only one left at home.

Bella said that she would come by and by.

Lina went to Aunt Claudine, and afforded her some real consolation, and even pleasure.

"Oh," asked Lina, "are Africans and negroes the same thing?"

"Most certainly."

"Well, I can't tell you how much I dislike Africans and negroes. I've nothing to say against their being free, why shouldn't they be? But they might have become so before this or afterwards: why, just at this very time? Why must they deprive me of my beautiful season of betrothal? Nobody is disposed to be merry, nobody talks of any thing else, by reason of these negroes. It's the fashion even to wear chains now, called *Chaînes d'esclaves*, — Oh, I wanted to ask you something — what was it — yes, I know now. Just tell me what they're going to do when the negroes get to be good people just like everybody else, what they're going to do then with the Devil?"

"What has the Devil to do with it?"

"Why, how are they going to paint the Devil, if he's not to be black any longer?"

Aunt Claudine had to indulge in a most hearty laugh, and she was very much rejoiced to be reminded that, in the midst of this montonously sombre life, there was some liveliness still left in the world.

She was ready to go with Lina to the Castle, but just as they were leaving the house, Bella came. She begged that Aunt Claudine and Lina would not put off their excursion on her account, and shut herself up in the library, while the Aunt and Lina proceeded to the castle. They remained there until the afternoon, and often looked down to the Villa where "the men were all engaged in such a queer business," as Lina expressed herself.

Bella did not stay long in the library, but quickly returned to the villa, and noiselessly went up the steps overgrown with mistaria.

Sonnenkamp went to his wife, thinking that he must inform her of what was now going on. She tauntingly reminded him of his promise to return to America; she did not want the decision to be in the hands of strangers.

Sonnenkamp's practice was to let Frau Ceres speak just as long and as much as she pleased; for it was a matter of perfect indifference to him what she said.

When he had got through with this, he returned to his room, and sent word to those who arrived, that he would extend a welcome to them when he appeared before the tribunal.

Weidmann came first with the Prince Valerian and Knopf, then Clodwig with the Banker, and the Doctor with the Justice. Professor Einsiedel stopped a while at the dog-house, and talked very earnestly with the field-guard, and was highly delighted at the sound views of the man in dog-training. Once he tapped upon his forehead with the fore and middle fingers, wishing to impress upon his memory one observation of Claus, which explained to him a passage in the eighth book of Pliny, treating of land-animals.

The Major came in full uniform, wearing all his decorations; and when he saw that Clodwig had come in plain citizen's clothes, without a single decoration, he said to himself in vexation, —

"She was right here, too; but I thought as it was a tribunal of honor — well, no matter; it's no harm, anyhow."

Eric had made all the requisite arrangements in the music-saloon; but, by Sonnenkamp's order, the chairs, the side-board set out with eatables and drinkables, and every

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thing else needful, were removed to Sonnenkamp's room. He placed his chair with a table before it near the door leading into the seed-room, to which he then withdrew.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE NEW CAIN.

After the men had assembled, Eric knocked at the door, according to a pre-concerted arrangement; and, as it opened, Sonnenkamp came forward. A bluish pallor rested on his countenance, as he stepped up to the little table where two sticks for whittling and a pocket-knife were placed. Resting one hand upon the table, he began, —

"Gentlemen of honor and worth!"—here pausing a moment, he continued, "I use the words worth and honor, because they are not always, and, in fact, are very seldom, united together, — you fulfil a human duty in coming here at my call, and bestowing upon me a portion of your life, these hours, your feelings, and your thoughts. I acknowledge this favor. On the Western prairies, in the lonely log-house, in order to form an opinion of a man from whom wrong has been suffered, and in order to pronounce a verdict thereupon, and to execute it, we call in the neighbors living on the solitary farms for miles around; and I have done this now, and you have come here in obedience to the call. You are to pass a judgment, you are to decide upon what penalty shall be inflicted in reference to acts that cannot be weighed in the balances of legal statutes. I shall lay open to you, without reserve, my past life. I can do this the more easily, as you know already the worst in my case. You are to see how I have grown up from childhood, and then to decide and to judge. I have never felt pity myself, and I ask no pity from you: I ask for justice."

Sonnenkamp had begun in a depressed tone, and with downcast eyes; but he soon grew more animated, his countenance became more intent, and his eye lighted up.

"I make the declaration, therefore, that I accept your finding, and submit myself to whatever expiation you may determine upon. I have only one request. Let each one of you, within a week, write out his opinion, and render in his verdict; then let the paper be given into the hands of Herr Captain Doctor Eric Dournay, who will break the seal in the presence of two other persons.

"I will now withdraw a moment, in order that you may determine whether you will undertake the service under this condition, and, if you think it expedient, may choose a foreman."

He bowed. There was something theatrical and yet gravely composed in his manner of speaking, and in the way in which he now withdrew for a moment into the adjoining apartment.

The assembled gentlemen looked at one another; but no one spoke: all eyes were turned upon Clodwig, from whom an opinion was first expected.

He said now in a quiet and low tone, —

"Herr Weidmann will be so good as to undertake the office of foreman. We need one to make, in the first place, the necessary preliminary arrangements."

Weidmann at once accepted the position, and announced that he agreed to the proposal for a written verdict. The rest were also ready; out Professor Einsiedel, beginning timidly, and gaining more and more confidence as he proceeded, said that this ought not to exclude consultation together in order to elucidate and confirm the individual opinion: otherwise, all the effect of a common tribunal would be lost, and it would be superfluous for them to sit there together.

This opinion was acceded to, and Eric was deputed to call Sonnenkamp again into the room.

As Eric opened the door, he thought he noticed a nestling like that made by a silk dress, and he was at a loss what to make of it.

He found Sonnenkamp in the seed-room, hurriedly smoking a cigar: he laid it down, and went back to the audience-room.

Weidmann informed Sonnenkamp of the conclusion they had come to, and the remarks of Professor Einsiedel.

Sonnenkamp nodded assent.

"Before I resume," he said, taking one of the pieces of wood with a smile, "I must beg indulgence for a habit which I am sorry to say I cannot drop. I am in the habit, when I am alone, busy in thought — and I shall address you as if I were alone — as I remarked, I am accustomed either to smoke or to whittle, oftentimes both together. I can compose myself better if my accustomed practice is now indulged in."

He seated himself, took one of the bits of wood, and, cutting a deep notch around it, began, —

"I beg that any one of you will interrupt me with questions if involuntarily I leave any thing obscure or unexplained. Now then: I am the only son of the richest man

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in Warsaw. If I tell you of my youth, it is not because I wish to throw the responsibility of my acts upon circumstances or upon fate. My father had the largest business in wood and grain. When I was six years old, he removed to a large German town, for in clearing a forest my older brother had been killed by a falling tree. My mother died soon after, and lies buried with him in the village near by. I was often told that I should have a step-mother; but it was not so. My father — I speak as openly of him as of myself — was one of the most popular of men, but felt no affection for any person or thing on earth. He gave both hands to every one who approached him, and was extremely complaisant, kind, cordial, and expressive; but, as soon as a man had turned his back, he spoke slightingly of him. He was a hypocrite from choice, even where there was no necessity of being so. He was so even towards the beggar. This, however, I did not perceive until at a later period. At my father's table there were present state officials, artists, and learned men: they liked good eating, and, in order to get it, were obliged to set off our table with their decorations and titles. We gave great parties, and had no social visiting. There were grand banquets in the house, and there sat down at them men decorated with stars, and women with bare shoulders: at the dessert I was brought in, passed from lap to lap, carressed and flattered, and fed with ices and confectionery. I was dressed handsomely, and in some old lumber-room there must be a portrait, — I would give a great deal to come across it again, — painted life-size, and with crisped locks, by the first court-painter, and afterwards sold with the rest of our household stuff. We had no relatives. I had a private tutor; for my father did not want to send me to a public school. I grew up the idol of my father, and he always kissed me warmly when I was carried to him by his order. My tutor indulged me in every thing, and taught me to regard myself alone as the central point of all, and never to pay any regard to my dear fellow human beings. This helped me more than he could imagine. The capital thing is to blunt the conscience, as it is termed: all men do it, but some more superficially than others. The world is nothing but a collection of egoisms hanging loosely together. When I was sixteen years old, I had already fallen into the hands of usurers; for I was the heir of a million, and that was a larger sum then than seven times as much to-day. My father's solicitor settled with them, and, as soon as that was done, I ran up new bills, delighted that my credit was so good. In short, I was a fast youth, and I continued to be so. I have already said, I believe, that I had no love, no respect even, for my father, who was — the truth must be told — one of the most exquisite hypocrites that ever wore the white cravat of respectability. My father was a very honest hypocrite. Others dissemble, and whitewash it over with a coating of ideality, persuading themselves that there is something real and actual in other things than money and pleasure. My father was also a philosopher, and used to say, My son, the world belongs to him who has strength or cunning enough to conquer it; and whoever takes a sentimental view has the pleasure of taking it, and nothing more."

Sonnenkamp scraped energetically at the bit of wood which he held in his hand, and for a moment nothing was heard but the scratching of the knife rounding off the end.

"This being said," he resumed, "I can continue with calmness. At seventeen years of age, I was a spendthrift, inducted into all kinds of respectable iniquities. I was a jolly comrade, a good-for-nothing fellow; but I was respectable, rich, and therefore very popular; for nature and destiny had been terribly lavish in securing this result. My father regularly paid my gambling debts and other debts also. He went with me to the ballet, and often handed me his more powerful opera glass, that I might get a better view of the sylph-like Cortini, who was no stranger to me, as he very well knew. Yes, we were a jovial set. My father gave me only one counsel, and that was, Don't confine yourself to one. Every Sunday I must dissemble, and say I was going to church; but my father knew well enough, and took a secret satisfaction in the knowledge, that I went elsewhere. Our carriage stood every other Sunday at the church where the most pious and celebrated preacher held forth; and on the alternate Sunday we did not drive, but walked, for then our coachmen also went, and our horses, too, had a Sunday. Our very servants must appear pious. My father was Protestant, and I was Catholic out of regard to my mother. I leave it for others to decide in which confession hypocrisy is cultivated the more successfully.

"Now the question came up what was I to do? I had no fancy for sitting at the accountant's desk, and wanted to be a soldier; but I was not of noble rank, and was not willing to be received at the Jockey

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Club simply on sufferance. I dropped off from my youthful companions, and from that time played the gentleman. I went to Paris. I enjoyed a superfluity of the pleasures furnished by the world. Most people plume themselves upon their virtue, and their virtue is nothing more than a feebleness of constitution; they make a virtue of necessity. When I had sowed enough wild oats, my father sent for me. I lived at home, and the specimens I saw before me of what was termed virtue were nothing but cowardice, and fear of not being respected. To be virtuous is a bore; to appear virtuous is amusing and profitable at the same time. Every thing that can be done without detection is allowable: the main thing is to belong to society. I often went from the most brilliant assemblies into the wretchedest dens; and the lowest vice seemed to me the most worthy of respect. I was a roué, and remained so. We were proud of being a rollicking and reckless crew. It had a sort of poetic tinge. Let one be a poet like Byron, be a genius, an exception to the ordinary crowd, and what in lower conditions would be crime is then regarded as a gallant feat. I saw that the whole world was vice under a mask, and I think there is no vice; the name is given, poison is written on the phial, so that the bulk of mankind may not drink out of it. I was made acquainted, whether accidentally or designedly I do not know, with a beautiful girl, fresh as a rose. It was time that I, at one and twenty, should settle down as a married man. All congratulated me on having sowed my wild oats, as it is termed, and that I was now to become a respectable husband and the head of a family. My betrothed was an enthusiastic child, and I don't understand it to this day, how she could make light of my past as she did, probably under the direction of her mother. Why I married the child I do not know. As I was going to church, and returning from it, as I was making the wedding trip, in which every thing was very modest and proper, it seemed to be somebody else, and not myself, who was the actor. We returned, and — but I will spin out the story no further than to say, that I discovered an earlier attachment of the sweet child. The only thing that vexed me was to be laughed at. I left her, and while the arrangements were being made for a separation, she died, and with her an unborn life. I was again free, free! That means that I was in Paris. I wanted to enjoy life: to drain the cup to the very dregs. Dissipation, dissipation, was my sole end: I yearned for distracting pleasure — I wanted to exhaust life, and every morning it was new born. My soul was a void, a void everywhere. I despised life, and yet did not fling it from me. What has life to offer? Reputation or riches — the former I could not strive after, the latter was open to me. My father wanted to hold me within a narrow range. I operated on the Exchange. I gained considerable sums, and lost them again, but still had enough left to keep afloat by means of gambling. I was at Marseilles, among a jolly set, when I heard of my father's death. The largest part of my inheritance was seized upon by my creditors, and, because I wanted to have no recollections of home, I wrote to the attorney to sell off every thing. A malicious saying went the rounds after his death. We had had no idea how well he was known; now it was said, 'There was one good thing about him, and that is, he was better than his son.'

"The Germans say that God and the Devil are wrestling with one another for the dominion of the world. I have hitherto only heard of these two mighty potencies, they have never yet presented themselves before me; but I was convinced that there were two things engaged in a strong tussle, and these were Work and Ennui. Men benumb themselves in work, in pleasure, in the foolery of morality, as it is termed. All is vanity, the wise king has said; but it ought to be said, All is stale, tedious, flat, a long-drawn yawn, that ends only in the death-rattle. I have run over the whole sandy desert of ennui, and there is no remedy there but opium, hashish, gambling, and adventure. I took lessons of a juggler, and acquired great skill, for which I stood in high repute among my companions; I had the most splendid apparatus. I lived in Italy at a later period, out of pure wantonness, as a juggler by profession. I was in Paris at the time of Louis Philippe; there's nothing merrier than these frequent *émeutes:* they are the people's games of chance."

Sonnenkamp stopped, and now, boring with his knife very delicately, he said, —

"Do you look at me in astonishment, because I impart wisdom? Well, that is also insipid like every thing else: honor, gold, music, friendship, glory, all is emptiness. The men of virtue, the men of honor, are all like those augurs who could not look into each other's faces without laughing at the idle tale which they impose upon the world. The gods of to-day, in the church as well as in the world, say, we know that you are only hypocrites; but that you must

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play the hypocrite is an evidence of our authority. And the so-called delight in nature, in mountain and valley, in water and forest, sunlight and moonlight and starry brightness — what does it all amount to? a mere cheat, a curtain to hide the grave you are to lie in. What is a man to do in the world? Do you know that millions have lived before him, and have looked at the stars? Is he to be proud of playing the same old tune over and over again, like the man with his hurdy-gurdy, grinding out the same melody to-day and to-morrow that he did yesterday? You see I had learned my Byron by heart. The misfortune was, that I was neither a poet nor a highly interesting pirate. I was disgusted with the world and with myself. I did not want to kill myself. I wanted to live, and to despise every thing. I had madly, as if in mockery of myself, lost every thing at play; and now came the merriest thing of all. It was a cold, wet night; but it suited me well, as I went through the streets, completely plucked as I was. Whew! How lustily the wind blew! it was cooling. Here was I traversing the ant-hill of the great city; my money I had gambled away, and my love had been unfaithful. A nice, prudent little fellow there was, who proved to me over a bottle of canary, that I possessed a capital which I didn't understand how to put at interest; that I was a born diplomatist. I knew the decoy-duck at the first whistle. I was to be a diplomatist, and so I sported that character. New horses, new servants, a new love, and a large new house, were now mine. I was an attaché; in good German, I was a spy. I cover the word with no nice little moral cloak. The life was a merry one. This time the discovery had been made: now dissembling had a definite end. The praise which the ambassador lavished upon me I deserved more than he was aware. Did you ever hear of being insured against the insurance company? I brought the ambassador most important information; but I had an after-appointment with the minister of police, and gave him secret notice of the ambassador's machinations. The ambassador gave me false information; but we could extract from this what his real intention was."

A smile passed over the countenances of the hearers, and Sonnenkamp continued, —

"A day came when I must flee. I had the choice of five passports with five different names under which to travel. I wanted, first of all, concealment; and one is best concealed among so called honest people. I came to Nice, where I was a gardener. All my senses were paralyzed. I seemed to myself a corpse, and as if I with my thoughts were only the companion of this corpse. Here I and the gardener became one again; the odor of the moist earth was the first thing that, for a long time, had given me any pleasure, no, that made me feel I was alive. Chemistry can imitate every thing; but the fragrance that rises out of the fresh earth no perfume ever possessed. Herr Dournay surprised me on the first hour of his arrival, just as I was digging in the fresh mould. It gave me strength. The masquerade pleased me; I had good sleep, a good appetite. The gardener's daughter wanted to marry me. I had again a reason for flight. I had laid away a good sum of money; now I dug it up. I began a new life of pleasure at Naples. I confess I was proud of assuming all sorts of transformations: I was entirely afloat, in good health and good spirits. I had a good circulation, and social talent: the world was mine. I had friends wherever I went: how long were they my friends? Perhaps only so long as I stuck fast to my money. That was a matter of indifference to me. I desired no loyalty, for I gave none. I was always thankful to my parents for one thing; they had given me an indestructible constitution. I had a body of steel, a heart of marble, and unshakable nerves; I knew no sickness and no pity. I have experienced many provocations to pity" —

He paused. It was the only time during his whole speech that he smiled; and a peculiar smack of satisfaction proceeded from him.

Then he continued: —

"A strange trait of sentimentalism stuck fast to me, however. It was at Naples, on a wonderfully beautiful evening, we were sailing in a miscellaneous and merry party on the sea, and I was the merriest of the whole. We disembarked. Who can tell what transpires in a human being? At this time, there, under the bright Italian sky, in the midst of laughing, singing, jesting men and women, the thought darted through my mind: What hast thou in the wide world? Nothing. Yet there is one thing: yonder in Poland thy mother's grave. And out of laughing, wanton Italy, I travelled without halt through the different countries, saw nothing, journeying on and on towards dreary, dirty Poland. I came to the village that I had not seen since my sixteenth year. And such is man — no, such am I! I did

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not want to undergo the pain of seeing my mother's grave. I looked over the burial-ground hedge; but I did not go inside, and travelled back again without having seen the grave. Such am I, so good or so bad; I believe they are one and the same thing. I travelled through Greece and Egypt, and was in Algiers. I have led a life of utterly unbridled excess, and have done every thing to undermine my vital power, but have failed to accomplish it. I have an iron, indestructible constitution. I was in England, the land of respectability. It may be that I have a special eye to see them; but I saw everywhere nothing but masks, hypocrisy, conventionalism. I took ship for America. You will laugh when I tell you that I meant to join the Mormons, and yet such is the fact. These people have the courage and honesty to ordain polygamy by law, while in the rest of the world it exists under a lying disguise. But I was not suited to that community. I soon returned to New York, and there I found the high-school and the Olympus of gamblers. The fast livers of Paris and London are bunglers compared with the Yankees. It was the fashion to declaim against the Southern chivalry; but I have found among them truly heroic natures, of the stuff out of which conquering Rome was built up. Only he who has been in America knows what the being that calls himself man is in reality. Every thing there is reckless, untrammelled. They only dissemble in the matter of religion, that's respectable."

Eric and Weidmann looked at each other. Weidmann had given expression to the same thought a few days before at Mattenheim, but in a wholly different connection.

Sonnenkamp went on.

"My five passes were still good. I went here under the name of Count Gronau: the Americans are fond of intercourse with noblemen. After a wild night, I shot a man who had insulted me on the public street. I fled, and lived for a time among the horse-thieves of Arkansas. It was a droll life, a life of craft and adventure that nowhere else has its like. Man becomes there a lurking beast of prey, and my body underwent the most monstrous experiences. I left this partnership, and became a sailor on a whaling-ship. I had shot lions and leopards in Algiers, and now I was hunting the king of the ocean. The whole world is here only to be captured and subdued. I have been through all sorts of experience. I soon gained dexterity enough to reach the position of boat-steerer, and I was appointed to this. There was one thing more; to hunt men, the merriest of all. This was adventure worth engaging in, this man-hunting: here was a new excitement, a novel attraction. We sailed for Madagascar through many perils. We caught men and bought men; boldness and cunning were called into activity, and the business pleased me. Great risk, great profits. In Louisiana, where the great sugar plantations have each three, four, and five thousand slaves, and in Charleston, South Carolina, are the chief slave-markets; for the most part, boys are carried there, and no elderly men. You will consider it contemptible; but it does appear to me a triumph of human freedom and power for one man to steal and sell another. No animal can so seize and serve his kind, always supposing, though by no means granting the fact, that negroes are men. Yes, I have been a slave-trader: they called me the sea-eagle. That bird has the sharpest scent, he flies off, and cannot be caught. It was a bold and beautiful pastime. I have even stolen the chief who was selling me his subjects. These talking black beasts are equal to their so-called fellow-men in one respect, perhaps, — I say perhaps, — they can play the hypocrite like white men. No beast can dissemble, and, if dissembling can give a title to human rights, then the blacks deserve that title. After the first burst of rage, the chief was very tractable; but one day I was pursued, with my cargo on board, by an English ship, and had to pitch the whole human dust-heap into the sea. This gave food to the sharks. Look here, this is the finger which the chief tried to bite off: you know how he has made his appearance in these days. From that time I left off going to sea, and carried on the business through others; finally I gave it up altogether. I had enough, I had large plantations, and the child of the boat-steerer, who had died in the whale-fishery, had been brought up by me, and I married her. Such a being, only half-awake, prattling like a child in every thought, or, rather, with no thought at all, was pleasing to me. I had at that time no idea that there were women with great, heroic, world-conquering souls."

Sonnenkamp spoke these last words in a very loud tone. After a short pause, he continued, —

"I was living in quiet retirement when the insane party of the North arose, whose object was to abolish slavery. And when my own countrymen entered into the front ranks as the magnanimous friends of man, I came forward in the newspapers and

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acknowledged myself a German, in order to say that all were not like these shriekers about humanity. I showed that it was madness to desire to free the slave. Humane men wanted to render benevolent aid; but the wretchedness of the world is not cured by benevolence, nor the poverty, nor the crime. The works of mercy, all seven together, do not help the world, they are all quack-remedies: the only real benevolence to the lower orders of men is slavery. They want to be nothing else than what they are: the best thing is for them to be taken care of by their masters — for the blacks certainly, and no less so, perhaps, for the whites. Herr Weidmann knows that his nephew has been my bitterest enemy. I was in the Southern States, and there I and my compeers were nobles. We are the privileged class. There are privileged races, and privileged persons among those races. The barons of the Southern States seemed to me the only honest men I had become acquainted with; everywhere else there was hypocrisy. I was displeased, indeed, that they wanted to get for their cause the cover of religion; but it was a rich joke that the ministers of religion volunteered their aid in this attempt.

"But I soon learned to have less regard even for this Southern chivalry. They are hypocrites, too; for they hold slaves, and yet despise him who imports the slaves. This is a remnant of the old hypocrisy of setting up a standard of virtue. Why deny the natural, open, pitiless mastership? Why not openly acknowledge that which they acknowledge in secret? Because the English worshippers of rank place slave-traders in the category of pirates? Even the freemen of the South are themselves the slaves of a vulgar notion. Now it came over me. When I had a son, a longing was awakened within me which I could not appease. I know not whether I have already told you, that, in my early days, the thought often occurred to me, had I been a noble, had I with my courage and my ability entered the military service, I should have become a steady man like the rest: I might have been for a time dissipated; but then I should have managed my estate, and been the founder of an honorable line. The fundamental cause of my adventurous, restless life always seemed to me to be the fact that I was a commoner, having every claim to a privileged station, and yet always thrust into the back-ground. I know that it is an inconsistency; I despise the world, and I strive after honor. This proceeds from a youthful impression of what was meant by the nobility. The only guaranty for the world's smile is rank and genius; without one of these you do not escape from mediocrity and sufferance. I pictured to my wife what a grand life was led at some little court in Germany, and it became a fixed idea in her mind. One can tear out the heart more easily than root out from it a thought. I see the struggle coming in the New World: courage and strength are on our side. There will be a slaughter unparalleled; but we shall be victorious. The Southern States want independence, and this is the only, the highest thing. I have labored in Europe for our cause. We lived in England, in Italy, in Switzerland. I thought, for a time, of becoming what is called a free, sober citizen of Switzerland. But I hated Switzerland: it suffers the foreigner to be free, so long as he is a foreigner; if he becomes a citizen of the State, he can no longer be a free man, but must take part in all their petty concerns. He who is not earning money, and who will not be pious — one can do both at the same time without much trouble — he who doesn't want to live frugally, will not do for Switzerland. No court, no nobility, no barracks there! — nothing but church, school, and hospital, things that are of no account to me. I didn't want to remain in Switzerland, with inaccessible heights before my eyes; it's oppressive, and for that reason, here on the Rhine it's cozy and homelike. Germany is and will be the only land for free men. Here one pays his tax, and is let alone. No one has any claim, and in his position the nobleman is liable to no interference. I returned to Germany, because I wished to acquire for myself and for my son a brilliant position in society. The regard of one's neighbors, one's fellow-men, is a fine luxury, perhaps the very finest: this, I wanted to have too. I wanted to give my son what only the German perfectly knows, dutiful service; and with this view there was perpetually ringing in my ears one melody — the only sentimentalism I can reproach myself with — a villa on the Rhine. This was the dream of my childhood, this, of my mature life, and this has been my ruin. When I looked the whole world over, and asked myself where life could be passed most happily, then I had to confess, as I said before, that it is the highest pinnacle of enjoyment to be a rich baron of some small German state. Here one may have a life fraught with enjoyment without any claim of duty, and receive all honor in a limited circle, and enjoyment besides. I have become familiar with all the different

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strata of existence. I have caroused and scuffled with the red-skins, and more than once have been in danger of adorning some Indian with my scalp, and I wanted now to make trial of the red-collars and *their* chief. I did not want to leave the world without knowing what court life was. I cherished still one idyllic dream — something of the German romance hangs by me yet — and, not without reason, I called my house Villa Eden. Here it was my purpose to live in enjoyment with my plants, and like my plants; but I have been dragged again into the world, more by the thought of my children than any thing else. Enough; you are well aware that I wanted to be ennobled. Let it be. I have now come to the end. But" —

He paused, and looked at what he had whittled out; it was an African's head, with the tongue lolling from his mouth. With one sharp cut, Sonnenkamp suddenly cut off tongue and mouth, so that they fell down into his lap; then, grinning like the figure in his hand, he went on: —

"I have placed myself and mine under the protection of civilization; I have taken refuge, not in the savage wilderness, but in the bosom of cultivated life, as it is termed. To be honest, I do not repent it. I am no milk-sop; my soul has been tempered in the fire of hell. I made no concealment of my past history, because I considered it bad. What in this world is bad? I concealed myself from folly and weakness. Thousands repent without becoming any better. Had I been a soldier in a successful war, perhaps I should have been a hero. I am a man without superstition: I haven't even the superstition of the so-called humanity. I live and die in the conviction that what is called equal rights is a fable; to free the negro will never do a particle of good, they will be exterminated, when it comes to the pass that a negro may sit in the White House at Washington. The world is full of hypocrisy, and my only pride is, that I am no hypocrite.

"But now, honorable and worthy gentlemen, is there any question you would like to ask? I am ready to answer it."

He made a pause.

No one made any response.

"Well, then," was his close, "gentlemen of honor and of virtue, I demand of you, not for my own sake, but for the sake of my children, to impose upon me some sort of reparation. If you demand that I should kill myself, I will do it; if you enjoin banishment, I will go away; if you require the half of my property, which is far more than I have ever acquired from the negroes, my fellow-men, as they are called, I will resign it. I thank you, and await your verdict on the appointed day."

He retired, and left the men by themselves.

Clodwig whispered to Eric, —

"Cain slew his brother: the Cain of to-day sells his brother."

CHAPTER IX.

CONSULTATION OF THE MEN, AND A WOMAN'S VERDICT.

WHO could describe the various changes of expression in the features of the judges during Sonnenkamp's speech!

After he had retired, they sat together in silence.

Weidmann looked bright and unmoved: his clear blue eye was calm, and he seemed surprised by nothing he had heard.

The Major was busy with an internal struggle, passing, in review before him, his neglected youth. He often struck his breast with his clenched hand, thinking to himself, —

"Yes, who knows but that you might have become just like this!"

And he was overpowered by the emotion caused by considering his own case, and that of the man who had spoken so defiantly. He wanted to keep from shedding tears, but did not succeed. He wiped off the perspiration from his face with his handkerchief, and at the same time got rid of the tears. He longed to go to the poor rich man, embrace him, and call out to him, "Brother, brother, you have been a very bad brother; but now you are going to be a good brother: you will be?" But he did not venture to give way to the impulse of his heart. He looked round, to see whether any one would begin; but no glance was directed towards him, except the kindly one of Professor Einsiedel, to whom the Major nodded, as if he would say, —

"Yes, in all your books, you have never seen any thing like this. It is horrible, that a man can think and do all this; but I pity him from the bottom of my heart, and you pity him too: I see you do."

The Doctor was the first to speak aloud, and he said to Clodwig, —

"We have been, without meaning it, the listeners to a comic performance. A simple-minded transgressor, a transgressor

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from the impulse of passion, can, perhaps, be converted; a cunning and hardened one, never."

"With all my detestation," replied Clodwig, "I admire this power, which can so lay bare the hypocrisy of the world. Oh," —

His mouth seemed parched; and he moved his tongue frequently, this side and that, appearing unable to say any thing further. He looked at the expressive countenance of the Banker, and, nodding to him, said, —

"I see you have a word to say. Pray say it."

The Banker, coloring very red, responded, —

"Certainly. I will not speak of the emotion this life-history has excited in me. It is — I know not what to call it; but I think it is a history of humiliation: and perhaps a Jew ought to be inclined to judge righteously, I will say mercifully, of all sins and transgressions which proceed from being slighted and contemned. Humiliation, placing the matter in a social point of view, awakens bitterness, hardness, recklessness; and it must be a peculiar nature, which becomes, under its influence, mild, even to faint-heartedness and weakness."

The Doctor respected the man's point of view; but he did not seem disposed to accede to it. He urged a decision, asking, —

"Have you any method of punishment or reparation to propose?"

"First of all," replied the Banker, "I don't know any thing else, except to take away from this man all parental power over his children; and we must devise some delicate way of doing this, in order not to inflict suffering upon them."

"We Germans," cried the Doctor briskly, "are for ever and ever schoolmasters. This hard, seared villain of a Sonnenkamp wants to teach that his villany is pure wisdom and logic; and he contemptuously garnishes his cynicism with ideas."

"Exile," began Professor Einsiedel, — "exile would be the only sentence we, like the ancients, could pronounce upon him who has desecrated and insulted all the blessings of civilization; but there is no land to which we could banish him, where, stripped of all the conquests won by civilization, he could atone for his past life."

Professor Einsiedel seemed not to take it amiss that he had an opportunity to put to a practical use the studies he had made of the history of slavery, and to show how the Greeks had no perception of its iniquity; but the Doctor laid his hand upon the professor's shoulder, as much as to say, —

"Some other time, I pray."

The Professor gave him a nod.

"Every punishment we suspend over him," said Prince Valerian, "is a punishment of his children: he is protected by an invulnerable shield."

There was now a longer pause. "And yet we shall and must find one," cried Weidmann. "I beg you to come together here, a week from to-day, at the opening of the sealed opinions; and then we will come to a decision. It is our duty to find some punishment that will make atonement without striking the guiltless."

In a faltering voice, the Major entreated the friends not to separate: they had, as yet, come to no proper decision; and he could not help himself out of the difficulty. He would have been very glad to ask that he might be allowed to take Fräulein Milcb into counsel, for he was sure that she could help him; but in a jury one must make up an opinion for himself.

The heavy head of the Major swayed this side and that, and seemed to be almost too heavy for him to hold up.

Those assembled seemed to desire to be freed from the painful situation; and Weidmann exclaimed, —

"I pronounce the meeting adjourned."

They all rose as if they must escape from imprisonment, or from an infected atmosphere. They would have liked to go out into the fresh air; but it rained steadily, and there were puddles and small rills in the garden walks. They went into a spacious apartment, and Claus said, —

"How would it answer — allow me, gentlemen, to ask — how would it answer, if we sentenced Herr Sonnenkamp to go back home, and sell himself for a slave?"

As no one replied, he went on timidly, —

"I dont know whether that would be just the thing; but 'twould be something, anyhow."

Weidmann told him that no white man could be made a slave.

"This Herr Sonnenkamp," said Clodwig with quivering lips to Eric, "is nothing but a victim of the distracted condition of our age. The whole of humanity at the present time has a troubled conscience; it knows that it is not in harmony with itself, and this creates a universal unrest. This individual man, driving hither and thither, prosecuting iniquity by night, and extremely respectable by day: this is the outbirth of our life. Ah! excuse me, I feel quite sick."

Clodwig requested the Doctor to accompany him to Wolfsgarten, as he felt very

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unwell; but, just as the Doctor was getting into the carriage with him, he was called to Frau Ceres.

Joseph came, in a short time, and informed Clodwig that the Doctor could not leave his patient.

The Doctor remained with Frau Ceres, who had strangled the parrot in a paroxysm of madness, and smashed every thing in the room.

He opened a vein, from which the blood flowed very dark; and she became more quiet.

Sonnenkamp did not leave his room when the account of his wife's illness was brought to him.

The doctor again sent word to Clodwig, that he had better remain here, especially as it was raining very hard, and the Rhine was beginning to rise; but Clodwig insisted on returning home.

Now the Doctor came himself, and begged the banker to drive with Clodwig to Wolfsgarten, and Clodwig himself entreated this favor of his old friend.

The latter agreed at once, only saying that he would first drive speedily to the town to send a telegram, that they need not expect him at home until some further notice. He drove away.

Bella had gone to the green cottage to see Aunt Claudine, and behaved there very amiably towards her and Lina; but she could not help letting fall some severe expressions in reference to the Professorin and Manna, who had so selfishly taken themselves out of the way whilst such a terrible transaction was taking place in the house.

When a servant came and informed her that Clodwig wanted to set out immediately, she exclaimed, stamping with her foot, —

"I will not!"

And then she added: —

"Very well, let him take me up here."

The carriage drove up; and Bella seated herself by Clodwig's side without his getting out: he sat shivering in one corner.

"Why do you not ask how I am?" said he, in a feeble, trembling voice.

Bella made no reply. She was internally struggling; but suddenly she exclaimed, —

"Foh! You ought all to be ashamed of yourselves! What are the whole of you in comparison with this man? He alone is a man, he alone. Here is something grand and strong among this lint-scraping, humanitary set. You are all imbeciles, cowards! This Sonnenkamp is the only great man, a strong man, a real man. Oh! if such a man" —

"Well? If such a man" —

"Ask me no more questions. I will drive home with you, home, — you have the right to command,—what more do you want? Not another word, not a word, or I shall not mind the pouring rain, not the least: I shall jump out of the carriage, I shall go off, I don't know where; but I won't be imprisoned any longer; I won't be banished to your miserable, old, pot-digging, pretty-spoken, vaporing, freedom-vaunting, humanity-rouged world!"

"Wife, what are you saying? Are good and evil then" —

"Pooh! Good and evil, these are the crutches on which you lean, because you have nothing to lean on in yourselves. A man must be strong, and have good grit: whether he is good or bad is a matter of indifference. Any thing but weak and sentimental; any thing but hiding behind your humanity with its blissful tears. A man who is not made of iron ought to be a woman — no, he ought to be a nun. You are nothing but a set of soft-hearted nuns. Yes, it must be so; it is so. A Jew to sit in judgment on such a man, and an atheist like this Herr Dournay! Yes, the atheists are the only consistent democrats. All are equal: there's no longer any higher being, no longer any God; then there's equality, and you are everybody's equal. Dastards, loafers! May you find goodly fellowship together! He is the only man. He has done you too much honor in wanting to belong to you, you are not worthy of him. You are all of you afraid of Jean Jacques Rousseau, of the fool of equal rights. It is still to be seen whether the world smothers itself in this mixed mass of equality, or whether there are heights for it to climb. You ought to go across the ocean; there's the last decisive battle-field; you are nothing but a nobility in a holiday uniform. The Southern States stand erect, and if they fall, there's no more aristocracy; then you'll all be clipped by the shears of equal rights. Just call the coachman in here, your brother-man! Don't let him be out there in the rain, he ought to be sitting with us in the carriage. Or shall I call him for you?"

She seized the cord, and the coachman reined in. After letting Clodwig wait in torture for a while, she cried, —

"Drive on, it's nothing."

She turned her head restlessly, this way and that. Her eyes wildly rolling, and grinding her teeth, she exclaimed in a loud tone:

"Fie upon all the cowards! Oh! if I were only a man!"

Clodwig sat in the corner, shivering. At

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this moment something clinked in Bella's mouth, and she put her hand up to it. What is that? Yes, she took it out — it is so. In her angry gnashing of her teeth, she had broken a front tooth, which had been tender for a long time, and required careful treatment. Bella clinched the hand in which she held the tooth, and pressed her lips together. What has happened to her? The thought rapidly shot through her, How vexatious it was that she could no longer ridicule those who wear false teeth; but yet she can, for nobody will believe that she, Bella, has a false tooth.

They met the Banker waiting for them in the town: he said that he had sent the message to his house, and was ready.

Bella got out of the carriage, and holding a handkerchief before her mouth, and speaking in muffled tones, requested the Banker to accompany her husband, and a servant to stay with her. She hurried towards the railroad. Arrived at the station, she was perplexed; and without taking the handkerchief from her mouth, she told the servant to take tickets for the Fortress. Then she sat still in a corner of the passenger-room, with two thicknesses of veil over her face. She rode to the Fortress-City. No one was to know that she wore a false tooth, no one was to see her with a gap in her teeth.

Clodwig drove homewards, and often wiped his eyes. Above all, his pride was wounded; he, Clodwig, was scorned, and by whom? By his wife. And on whose account? On account of this hollow-hearted adventurer. She has never loved me one single instant: that was a stab to his very heart, and this stab never ceased to be felt; for what he suffered bodily was transmuted into a suffering of the soul. Who is there that can measure this action and re-action of body and soul?

The rain had ceased; but a mist seemed before Clodwig's eyes, and a heavy gloom. He reached Wolfsgarten; but all the apartments seemed full of smoke, full of haze. He seated himself in his chair.

"I am lonely, lonely," he said to himself continually.

The Banker spoke to him in gentle words; but Clodwig shook his head: he knew that Bella had never loved him, that she hated him. He felt himself humiliated, scourged. Bella's words had wounded him to the heart's core, wounded him to the death.

They drew off his coat: he looked for a long time at the coat, and nodded with a sad smile.

Did he forebode that he would never put it on again?

When Bella returned home early the next morning, he looked at her with a ghost-like countenance: he perceived the coldness and hardness of her face.

"Medusa, Medusa!" shrieked Clodwig.

Without knowing he had uttered the words, he fell back on the pillows.

They restored him to consciousness. Hours of the severest pain elapsed before the Doctor came. Clodwig had also desired Eric to be sent for.

The Doctor came, and declared Clodwig to be dangerously sick; the jury trial had excited him too violently, and the drive home through the rain — "and perhaps something else," he added to Bella, who gazed at him without changing a muscle of her face.

Bella sent for her brother; but no one knew precisely where he was.

"I am lonely," said she, too.

She was terrified when she said this; for she felt that she would soon be really alone.

CHAPTER X.

A KNIGHT ERRANT.

It was difficult to hunt up Pranken, for he had lost himself when he left Villa Eden. No man ever walked with a firmer and a prouder step, while at the same time he was inwardly crushed, than Pranken. It was something more than external assumption, it was an habitual assurance that sustained him.

Pranken would have taken it hard if Manna had rejected him in order to become a nun. But to reject him on account of preference for another, reject him, — Otto von Pranken! — He was touched to the quick. Otto von Pranken had been refused; and he was very deeply in love. Can Otto von Pranken offer love, and not have it reciprocated? If the girl had taken the veil, and renounced the world, she would have renounced him with the rest, for he was a part of the world; but to be refused in this way, and dismissed on account of another man! — Otto von Pranken loves, and his suit is not accepted!

"Unprecedented!" He ground his teeth with rage. He never thought of what he had been guilty of in his life: he only felt his dignity insulted, his pride mortified, and his love scorned; for he loved Manna, and wanted to be united to her, and naturally, also, to her money; then he would be all right, and indulge his passion for handsome horses.

What should now become of him? For the first time in his life, Pranken felt a pity

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for himself: it seemed to him that he was misunderstood, misappreciated virtue, but, more than all, as if nobleness of bearing had been insulted, and fidelity rewarded with ingratitude. How great sacrifices he had made for this family! And now? It appeared to him as if there were a black funeral-procession passing along in his thoughts: you cannot crowd through it, you must wait until it has all gone by.

He rode away as if he had been thrust out of the world. Where shall he turn? To whom shall he complain?

Is Otto von Pranken to complain to a man, to appear in a helpless condition before any one?

He laughed outright as he now called to mind that he had contracted large debts, in anticipation of the millions which would certainly be his. What next?

Involuntarily he turned round once more, and looked back at Villa Eden.

There was only a single line needed, only a brief interview: yes, he had but to ride back, and represent this to Sonnenkamp, in order to come away with hundreds of thousands. But no, it must not be done.

"Fie!" said he to himself, "how could you ever have such a thought as that?"

He rode on, and came to the country-house of Herr von Endlich. There was a young widow here: should he now go in? He knew that his proposal would not be rejected here. No, not yet. But he reined in and dismounted. He asked after the gracious lady, and was told that she was travelling in Italy with her brother.

Sneering contemptuously at himself, he again mounted his horse.

He would tell Bella and Clodwig, — no, not even that. He had not taken them into his counsel: in opposition to the rest of the world, he had connected himself with Sonnenkamp, and was he now to be pitied by Clodwig, and stuffed with wise saws?

He turned his horse, and, riding up along the river, he came to Villa Eden again, and the horse wanted to turn in at the gate; but with whip and spur he urged him on.

He rode to the Priest's, and sent for Fräulein Perini, who came.

First he asked her if she wished to remain any longer in the family.

Fräulein Perini, looking him full in the face, declared that she hoped she had not mistaken him in supposing that he would not abandon every thing to the Huguenots. She asserted that she was the daughter of a man who had fallen in a duel caused by a less provocation.

The Priest here said, —

"My noble young friend! Not that, no, not that: what does it signify, this petty duel in a corner of the wood, and you killing one man even, according to the code of honor? You sons of the nobility must wage, under the banner of the Pope, the great contest with the revolution. Also for your own sake. On that field will be fought the great duel between faith and irreligion, between eternal law and frivolous self-deification, and the victory is yours."

Pranken smiled to himself; but he did not express how odd it seemed to him, when the Priest went on to state, that, before it was known how Sonnenkamp's money had been acquired, they might have applied a part of it to holy ends; but now it could not be done.

Pranken looked at the Priest, and smiled. Did not the Priest know the origin of the money before this?

He had it on his lips to say, "It is very amiable and prudent in you now, when nothing can be got, to act as if you had declined it." But it was not necessary; and why should he imbitter against him the only parties who remained his friends? Yes, he was here still an honored personage, not the solitary, abandoned one, who rode outside there on the road, up and down, not knowing which way to turn. He would now be prudent, he would play with men. He said he had separated from Sonnenkamp, because the latter would not give up to him, and devote a large sum for a pious purpose. He had the right to say this, he thought, for he had desired that it should be done. This was what he would now maintain; Manna's refusal was by this means put out of sight, and his obstinate adherence to Sonnenkamp had in it a sort of religious consecration.

The Priest reminded Pranken that to-day was the time for the church conference, and he was expected to be there.

Pranken took leave.

Fräulein Perini returned to the Villa, wearing a proud smile. Odd people, these Germans! She would at any rate stay until she had got enough for herself; she did not want to leave empty-handed.

Pranken rode off. He passed the villa which had belonged to the Cabinetsrath. Ah! they were prudent, they had secured their part of the booty before the decision. Why were you so simple, so considerate, and so trustful?

He put up his horse at the station, and rode in the cars to the city where the Bishop lived. He was expected there; but how was he to present himself to the com-

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pany? He came, luckily, just as the meeting had broken up. He was received with marked consideration at the palace of the Bishop; and he was glad to feel that there was still honor for him in the world: and here he came to a hurried resolve.

Here, also, Bella's messenger overtook him.

He set out, and reached Wolfsgarten. The first person he met was the Banker, who told him, with great emotion, that Clodwig was very ill. Pranken looked haughtily at the man; but he had good breeding enough to address him civilly.

He came to Bella. After she had told him of Clodwig's illness, she lauded Pranken as the only true freeman in remaining true to Sonnenkamp.

Pranken pressed his lips together, but made no reply. It was not the time now to make known what had happened, and the conclusion he had formed. And, when Bella asked him why he seemed so disturbed, he could give no answer.

"Why were you not at the trial? Have you come from Villa Eden? How are they there?" asked Bella.

"I don't know," Pranken finally replied.

Yes, how are they at Villa Eden!

CHAPTER XI.

SMOKE AND DESOLATION AT THE VILLA.

SONNENKAMP sat alone. He seemed to hear in his solitude a crackling, a low, almost inaudible gnawing, like a tongue of flame lapping the beams and joists, devouring more and more, and increasing as it devoured its prey. Such a low crackling, and such a lapping, he believed that he heard in his solitude.

He was mistaken, and yet he was well aware that there was a spark kindled, and it was burning noiselessly; it ran along the floor of the room, it reached the walls; the chairs, the closets, the books, are all on fire; the painted faces on the canvas are grotesquely distorted, and blaze up; and the flames spread on and on, creeping through all the apartments, enveloping at last the roof and the whole house, and flaring up into the sky.

Suppose that one should burn it all up, and every thing in it? No, there is another, a better means of deliverance, an energetic deed, a splendid, grand — here came a knock. It must be Bella coming to explain why she was not there when he returned from the trial to the seed-room. He opened the door quickly, and Weidmann, not Bella, entered.

"Have you any thing to ask me in private?" asked Sonnenkamp angrily.

"I have only a favor to beg of you."

"A favor? you?"

"Yes. Give me your son" —

"My son?" cried Sonnenkamp in astonishment.

"Will you be so good as to let me finish my sentence. Let your son come into my family for days, weeks, months, as long as you please; only let it be long enough for him to get a new hold in a different sphere. He needs an energetic and free activity. When your son passed a short time with me before this thing happened, I perceived with satisfaction that he had very little personal vanity with all his beauty. He takes pleasure in looking at others rather than at himself. This would be of help; and I would like to aid him still further. As your son will not become a soldier, perhaps it will be well for him to be instructed in husbandry."

"Is this a plan which you have agreed upon with Herr Dournay?"

"Yes, it is his wish; and it seems to me a very good plan."

"Indeed?" said Sonnenkamp. "Perhaps Roland has already been informed of this wish, and of how well it suits?"

"I cannot blame you for this bitter feeling, I can very well understand it; for it is no trifling matter to be placed in a situation where others undertake to dispose of us and ours."

"I thank you, I thank you very kindly."

"If you decline, then no one knows any thing about it, except Herr Dournay and myself."

"Have I said that I was going to decline? You will yet receive one proof how much confidence I place in you: I have made you one of my executors."

"I am much older than you." Sonnenkamp made no reply to this remark, and Weidmann continued, —

"What conclusion have you come to about my request concerning your son?"

"If he will go with you, he has my consent. Allow me one question. Is this the expiation you would exact of me, or a part of it?"

Weidmann said it was not.

The carriage in which the Professorin, Roland, and Manna returned, now entered the court-yard. Weidmann welcomed the Professorin very cordially, having known her a long time ago. He saw now for the first time, as a matron, the once blooming

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beauty. The three brought from Mattenheim a fresh strength for all that lay before them.

As they were sitting together in the green cottage, a messenger on horseback came from Clodwig to summon Eric to his side.

Weidmann now renewed the proposal for Roland to go with him to Mattenheim. Roland was advised by them all to go. Declaring that he needed no inducement, he readily assented, and drove away with Weidmann, Prince Valerian, and Knopf. He was protected and sheltered by such a number of good men.

Mattenheim was situated on the other bank of the Rhine; and, while the carriage was being ferried across, Roland stood at the stern of the boat, and gazed in silence for a long time at the parental home. Tears came into his eyes; but he restrained them.

A tornado swept through the park, eddying around the house; and the fires just kindled in it were extinguished. The many fire-places were of no avail, the whole house was full of smoke; and a whirling gust of wind seemed to tear all the inmates of Villa Eden away from each other. Roland was gone, Pranken was seen there no more, Manna lived with the Professorin in the green cottage, and Eric had ridden away. Only Sonnenkamp and Frau Ceres were there. Fräulein Perini came, and informed Sonnenkamp that his wife desired to speak with him instantly: she was in a state wholly beyond her control.

Sonnenkamp hurried to Frau Ceres' apartment; but she was not there. The maid said that as soon as Fräulein Perini had left the room, she had hurried through the house into the park. They went after her immediately, calling her by name. They found her, at last, sitting on the river bank, in the midst of the storm, splendidly dressed, with a coronet on her head, thick rows of pearls on her bare neck, heavy bracelets on her arms, and a girdle of glittering emeralds around her waist. She looked at Sonnenkamp with a strange smile, and then said, —

"You have given me rich and beautiful ornaments."

She seemed to grow taller: she threw back her black hair.

"Look, here is the dagger! I wanted to kill myself with it; but I hurl it away from me."

The hilt of precious stones and pearls sparkled through the air, plunged into the water, and sank.

"What are you doing? What does this mean?"

"Come back with me!" she cried, "or, look, I will throw myself into the river, and take with me these ornaments, the half of your riches."

"You are a deluded child," said Sonnenkamp contemptously. "You think, do you, that these are genuine stones? I have never given into your keeping, you simple child, any but imitation jewels: the genuine ones, in a like setting and case, I have fast enough in my own possession, in the burglar-proof safe."

"So! You are shrewd," replied Frau Ceres.

"And you, my wild child, you are not crazy."

"No, I am not, if I'm not made so. I shall remain with you, and never leave you for a single instant. Oh! I know you — Oh! I know you, you will forsake me."

Sonnenkamp shuddered.

What does this mean? How does it come to pass that this simple-minded creature has called out his slumbering thoughts, and brought them up from the depths of his soul? He addressed the kindest words to Frau Ceres, and, bringing her back to the house, kissed her. She became quieter; but the dermination was fixed in him to become free. There was only one thing to be won, and then away into the wide, wide world! But first of all, he must go to the capital, and shoot down Professor Crutius. He struggled and wrestled with the thought, and at last he was obliged to give it up. But the other thing must be. In confirmation of this hidden impression of his soul, there came a messenger from Eric, with the tidings that he could not leave Wolfsgarten, for Count Clodwig was at the point of death.

CHAPTER XII.

A TRYING INTERVIEW.

Eric rode to Wolfsgarten. He met on the way the Major and Fräulein Milch, who were walking close together under one large umbrella.

Eric told them that Clodwig was dangerously sick, and the Major said, —

"Don't let him have any other nurse. Fräulein Milch will come and take care of him. Herr Captain, one ought to be sick for once, so as to have Fräulein Milch nurse him."

Fräulein Milch declared herself ready to come to Clodwig, if she were called upon.

Eric rode on, and now sought to put in a right point of view all that he had experi-

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enced, so that he might gain the strength necessary to bear up under coming events. How much had happened to him and to others since he rode out from Wolfsgarten to Villa Eden? Every thing passed through his soul, and he breathed deep in silent satisfaction as he thought what would have been his condition now, if he had not exerted all his strength to bring himself into right relations with Bella. How different would it be, were he riding now with a soul torn by conflicting feelings, unable to help wishing for Clodwig's death in order that he might get possession of Bella, and obliged to stand like the most abject hypocrite by the bedside of the dying one. No poet yet has ventured to depict the mental state of two people who expect to base their happiness on the news of another's death; and these, no criminals but cultivated, and intelligent.

Eric looked upon himself as one rescued from destruction. Never was a man possessed by more pious emotions than Eric was now, as, stopping, he said to himself, —

"I thank thee, thou Eternal and Ineffable Spirit; for it is not I who have, through my education and inherited tendencies, become what I am. I am now pure: I will not be unworthy of it, but keep myself pure and innocent."

Wanting to get rid, finally, of his thoughts and speculations, he spoke to the messenger, an old confidential servant of the Wolfsgarten family. The messenger related how Clodwig had come home from Villa Eden in company with the Banker, and how they had thought he would have died at that time.

The servant turned round, and, pointing with his whip to Villa Eden, said, "There's no queerer state of things anywhere than in this world." In the midst of his deep distress, Eric could not help laughing aloud at this odd remark.

"Is any one of the relatives at Wolfsgarten?"

"No: the Jew is the only one there. But he is a friend of our master."

Eric regretted that he had entered into conversation with the servant, for he could not restrain him from talking about what he thought would be done, if the gracious master should die.

At the last hill, Eric dismounted, and walked over the wooded height. It was all still. The hornbeam tree, which first leaves out, was now the first to let fall its yellow leaves: there was a rustling and a low crackling in the wood, and only the hawk screeched above on the height.

Eric came in front of the manor-house, and entered the courtyard. He went to Bella, who looked pale and as if suffering severely. He entered just at the moment that Bella was asking her brother of the news at Villa Eden.

Eric was startled to meet Pranken here. Both had to use the strongest self-control in order to stand up under the interview.

Bella thanked Eric for being the first one to come to her.

"He is now asleep," said she: "he talks constantly of you. Be composed: you will hardly know him; give in to him in every thing, he is very excitable."

Bella's voice was hoarse; and, covering her eyes with a white handkerchief, she asked, —

"Were you present when your father died?"

Eric said that he was.

Bella went to inform Clodwig of Eric's arrival. Pranken and Eric were by themselves. For a long time neither spoke: at last, Pranken began, —

"I never thought that I should speak again to Herr Dournay; but we are now at a sick-bed, and for the sake of the invalid" —

"I thank you."

"I beg you to give me no thanks, and to speak to me just as little as possible, — just enough to excite no remark and nothing more."

He turned round and was about to go.

"Just one word," Eric requested. "We shall soon see an eye closed in death that has always beamed with gentle and noble feeling; let all bitterness toward me disappear, or, for a time, be suspended. Let us not, at such an hour as this, stand in hostility to each other."

"You can talk well: I know that."

"And I want to say what it is well for you to listen to. It troubles me that I appear to you ungrateful; but now, in this mysterious presence which awaits us all, I repeat" —

Bella returned and said, —

"He is still asleep. O Herr Dournay! Clodwig loves you more than he loves any other person in the world."

She gave Eric her hand, and it was cold as ice. The three were speechless for some time, until Eric asked, —

"Is there no hope?"

"No. The Doctor says that he has probably only a few hours to live. Do you hear any thing? The Doctor has promised to come, — to return immediately. Oh, if I could only induce Clodwig to call in

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another physician! Do urge him to do it: I have no confidence in Doctor Richard."

Eric made no reply.

"Ah, my God!" lamented Bella, "how forsaken we are in our need. You will remain with us, will you not? You will not abandon us?"

Eric promised to remain.

It had a strange sound, a reminiscence out of the past, with its forms of courtesy, as Bella now asked pardon for not having inquired after Eric's mother, Frau Ceres, and Manna; and, with a peculiar jerking out of the words, she asked, —

"How is Herr Sonnenkamp?"

A servant came, and announced that the Herr Count had waked up, and had asked immediately, if Herr Captain Dournay had not yet come.

"Go to him," said Bella, laying her hand upon Eric's shoulder. "Go to him, I beg you; but let it come as if from you, and not from me, that another physician should be called in."

Eric went; and, as soon as he had gone, Bella said hurriedly to Pranken, —

"Otto, get rid of the Jew as politely as you can. What does he want here?"

Pranken went to the Banker.

Bella was alone, and could not control her feeling of unrest. She had already arranged in thought the announcement of the decease, and had even written the words, —

"To relatives and friends I make the painful announcement, that my beloved husband, Count von Wolfsgarten of Wolfsgarten, formerly ambassador of his royal Highness at Rome, Knight of the first rank, has died after a short illness, at the age of sixty-five. I beg their silent sympathy.

"BELLA COUNTESS VON WOLFSGARTEN (*neé*, Von Pranken).

A demon continually whispered to her this announcement: she saw it before her eyes with a black border, even while Clodwig was still living. Why is this? What suggests these words, and brings them so clearly before her eyes? She could not get away from them. She took up the sheet of paper, tore it up, and threw the pieces out of the window into the rain.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE LAST BLUE FLOWER.

ERIC, meanwhile, had entered the sick-chamber.

"Are you here at last?" cried Clodwig. His voice was faint; and the small childlike hand which the sick man extended toward him appeared more delicate than ever.

"Sit down," said he; "don't be so broken down: you are young and strong, and have a good conscience. Let me take your hand. It is a happiness to die in the full possession of my senses: I have often desired to die a sudden death. Better as it is. Tell me, how is your mother? Are you really betrothed to the daughter of that terrible man."

Eric could not yet utter a word: he only nodded without speaking, and Clodwig continued, —

"That is fine, an instance of the grand truth of compensation in the world. Once, you were to become my son — my son! It is better as it is. I am to have no son. But tell me, how is Roland? Did he not want to come with you? I see him, the splendid youth! he is present all the time. You have done well, Eric, entirely well. You will stay with the young man. If we could only know what will become of the father!"

Before Eric could answer, the invalid lay back upon the pillow. He seemed to have fallen asleep. Nothing was heard but the ticking of the clock; and now a carriage drove into the court-yard, the wheels cutting into the gravel.

Clodwig awoke.

"That is the Doctor," he said aloud. He requested the attendant to say to the physician that he would like to be left with Eric alone for a time. The nurse gave the commission to the servant, and remained in the anteroom. Sitting upright, Clodwig said, —

"Shut the door: I want to speak to you in private."

Eric sat by the bedside, and Clodwig began, —

"This Sonnenkamp, so audacious, and yet — hypocrisy, it is everywhere; a jumble of grimaces, of masks who do not know one another. A sentence upon Sonnenkamp? I have let him off entirely. His path is zigzag, his goal horrible. Who shall judge? I say it here to you, my brain received a fatal lesion when the fearful thought entered into it. When I look over my own life, what is it? I have filled out a uniform: we are walking, empty sentry-boxes, painted with the national color. If a discharge comes, we think it something very mysterious; we whisper — all a farce. The life of most persons is hypocrisy, and so is mine, so long, so honorable! We have no courage, we do not confess what we are. We are encumbered with forms, compliances,

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courtesies, conformities; and all is false inside. We never tell each other what we are as we acknowledge it to ourselves. Don't be afraid. I have no crime, no transgression, now, to acknowledge and to feel remorse for. I have been all my life pure as thousands, as millions, by my side; but I have not been the person that I really am. Do you know that grand word which God spake when he revealed himself in the desert to the holy Shepherd? It is this. This is God. 'I am that I am.' This is the truth, truthfulness, the divine in every man; and men deny it. Who can say I am that I am? I never could, and millions by my side could not. We are all glossed over outside, all and everywhere over-refined — no, not all, but most of us: were all so, the sun would never again rise upon the earth. But the time will come, and you are one of those awaiting its coming, you will share in its life, — the time will come, when men shall dissemble no more, shall lie no more, shall pass themselves off! for no more than they are, and shall be what they profess to be. Do you comprehend me?"

"Perfectly, perfectly."

"Know, then, I tell you that I have not done what I ought to have done. I have not gone from hour to hour into the presence of those in power, and said, 'Thus am I, and thus must you be.' I have lulled myself with a false philosophy; I have persuaded myself that all would be spontaneously unfolded of itself; that we are in the direct line of the developing tendencies, and we have nothing to do in furtherance thereof. Ha, ha! unfold of itself! Yes, death comes of itself, death comes, and takes away the life that was no real life, no candid revealment, no genuine self. I once knew a great actor. To an actor, death will always be the hardest, not only because he has so often counterfeited death, but because he knows that he leaves behind him his parts, his masks, his paints, his wilted wreaths, his rounds of applause, and he can never be called out again. My son, we diplomatists, we die the death of the actor. I have led an unprofitable life. I had no fatherland to give me other than diplomatic farces to perform. My life has been a busy inactivity: I have spent the greatest part of my life in the livery and the defence of a cause which I did not respect, scarcely had any regard for. Here is this slave-trader. Fie! the whole world calls out in horror: and yet, in circles held in high estimation, there are far worse than slave-traders. Others, again, are not in the house of correction, because they were under no necessity of stealing, and because they were bought off by money from being positively immoral. There, give me now, I beg, a cooling draught, my mouth is parched."

Eric gave Clodwig a draught; but they were both so awkward, that it was almost all spilled.

"No matter, no matter," said Clodwig, smiling, "that's the way in this world: only the smaller part is really drunk, the larger part gets spilled, wasted. There, now go, and let the Doctor come, but come back again afterwards."

Eric went and called the physician. Bella asked what Clodwig had been talking about. He could only answer in general terms, and begged to be allowed to go into the open air for refreshment.

He went into the garden. The November wind was raging, and the rain driving fiercely. Eric wrapped himself in his cloak, and went into the wood: it did him good to walk in the midst of the uproar of the elements. He went through the park and the wood, by the same path which he had followed on the morning after telling the story of his life to his newly-won friend Clodwig. Now he could not stride on in exultant mood, as if borne onward by an external force; now he must battle with the storm which roared over him through the tree-tops. Now, as then, he stood under the covered pavilion; but in the wide landscape he could see nothing but clouds of driving rain. Close to the wall of the building there was still one beautiful blue-bell: unconsciously he broke it off, and, as he returned to the house, it occurred to him to carry the flower to the invalid. He entered the sick-chamber, and Clodwig cried, —

"Ah, the blue flower! You gather it and bring it to me. We have dreamed of them often in my youth. Youth, youth!" repeated the sick man often.

He seized the flower, then leaned far out of bed, and smelled of Eric's clothes, saying, —

"Ah! my son, why do the Bible pictures come up before me now? The patriarch Isaac said to his son as he came to his sick-bed, 'The smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed.' Yes, Eric, you bring all the free air of the fields into my sick-room. When I am no more, remember that you have done me good."

Eric wept.

"Yes, weep, it is well, it will do you no harm that I make your heart heavy. You will be happy and active on the earth

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whose clods will soon rest on me. Only, I pray you, stay by me when I die; and when I am dead, and they prepare me for the grave, take something from my heart which must stay there till it has stopped beating. Stay with me, Eric, I will not think of petty, individual interests. I will not leave the world in hatred and anger — no, not in hatred and anger against any man. Help me to attain to the universal, the grand: in those I will live and die."

He lay back on his pillows; and, as Eric leaned over him, his breath came quietly, and on his face was a gentle smile. What thoughts might now be stirring this soul?

Eric wanted to send a messenger to Villa Eden, to say that he must remain where he was. Lootz, who had been sent by Herr Sonnenkamp to inquire for the Count, carried the message back.

CHAPTER XIV.

MEMORIES OF CHILDHOOD OF A DYING SEER.

CLODWIG slept several hours, while Eric sat with the Banker, and drew refreshment from his self-forgetting sympathy. The Banker failed in many of the ordinary forms of society; but he possessed a nature full of tact, and, in the midst of his deep emotion, Eric thought that only unselfishness has genuine tact. Want of tact is at bottom selfishness; for the man who is without it thinks and acts only for himself.

Eric now saw the Banker in a new light. In Carlsbad he had made rather an effort to display his intelligence; but now his gentle and sensible character showed itself naturally. Eric remembered the Banker's once having said to him at Carlsbad, "The Jews are the children of compassion: they understand how to bear and to relieve sorrow much better than to create joy; the remembrance of past oppression gives them sympathy with all suffering."

The Banker was ready to lend help at any moment, but allowed himself to be put in the background again immediately.

Bella treated him with manifest neglect, but he took it good-humoredly, showing without words that he was not offended. She acted like her mother's own child; and moreover, he thought, she was not his friend. Clodwig was his friend, and he regarded it as a duty to bear something for his sake. He sat in the library, ready to answer any call, and retiring again as soon as he believed himself in the way. Towards midnight, Eric was suddenly summoned; Clodwig had waked, and asked for him.

"Ah! I have slept so well," said Clodwig; "and it's strange, I constantly dream now of my cousin Hatty, whom I am to marry. I like her, and she likes me; but she has learned, and will learn nothing at all, and she has such a shrill laugh, and says, 'Come, Clodwig, your're so sad, come, marry me, we'll be merry.' And then I say, 'Child, I'm so old already! see, I've no teeth left, and what will Bella say to it?' 'Ah, what' she says, 'nonsensical things! Come, we'll dance.' And then we dance down to the chapel; and there stands the priest beckoning to us, and we dance on, past the priest; and she's a splendid child with beautiful eyes, and loves me dearly: and so we dance on and on, and I can keep it up very well till I wake, without being tired."

"Is your cousin Hatty still living?"

"Oh, no! she died long ago. A few weeks since a grandson of hers was here with me. But isn't it strange that my first youthful love — I was hardly ten years old — should have awakened in me? And she had an apple in her hand, and bit into it, and then said, 'Take a bite too;' but, when I wanted to take the apple, she wouldn't let me, and said, 'Don't bite too much.' And, when I awoke, the taste of the apple seemed still in my mouth. Now it just comes back to me that we were once painted together. The painter declared that it would please us very much some time or other. He did it secretly, and, of course, the picture was bought of him; I believe it is still in existence; but I don't know where. Don't you like her name of Hatty? She is a half-grown girl in a pink calico dress and white apron, and that's the way she was always dressed, and she had a broad Florence straw hat, whose brim drooped down upon her shoulders." So Clodwig went on, and said with a repressed sigh, "Bella has never cared to hear about my youth;" but then, as if not wishing to speak of her, he quickly added in a trembling voice, stretching out both hands, "Now attend, and I can tell you my story. I have had a very different life from that Herr Sonnenkamp. My father was Prime-Minister, and I was born in the ministerial residence, the son of a late marriage, an only son, like Herr Sonnenkamp; but my life was different. My father became representative of the Confederacy to the German Diet, and then I often lived here in summer on our estate. The

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society of the representatives of the Confederacy, — who knows whether it is not passing away without any one's having pictured it truly, — I might have done it; even when I was still a student, it was plain to me that it was a society which exists only to stand in the way of every improvement. Come a little nearer and I will tell you what the German Diet is, — it is the evil conscience of the Princes. I thought so very early, and I was soon sure of it, and yet I stayed in the midst of it; and the farther I advanced, the more plainly I saw that it was true. All progress has built itself up apart from the Diet; and there is something like it in the Church. Progress is made without her, aside from her; she has not done away with capital punishment, nor torture, nor the confinement of prisoners in irons: none of these has she abolished. And now are coming the two great works of emancipation, — the emancipation of the slaves and of the serfs, and what is bringing them about? Humanity alone in its freedom of action. You see, this Herr Sonnenkamp lived in quite another world than mine, and yet my life, — Ah, wait a minute, wait, I cannot say more now."

After a while, Clodwig began again, —

"This Sonnenkamp is another proof to me, our civilization has the same defects as religion; it also gives no definite moral laws; it is not a complete, not the true civilization."

He sat up in bed, saying, —

"Come, I want to say my last word to you. Two things I see looming up in the future; the one is imperialism, which is trying to establish itself in America; and the other, yet more terrible, is called a war for religion. One party gathers around Rome; the other, around no man, no idea, but around freedom. Two great standards are raised, and around these standards gather two armies. Invisibly on the one banner is inscribed, 'We cannot!' on the other, 'We will!'

"Hear yet more. A new faith, a new knowledge is to come, which will re-create the world. We wander continually in a grave-yard, our life is dead. Only a renewal through a great idea, through a new religion. Ah" —

He broke off abruptly as Bella entered the room.

She expressed her satisfaction at Clodwig's animation, and Clodwig still preserved a courtly politeness towards his wife. She wanted to hand him some medicine, and he said, —

"Oh, yes! give it to me, but do not say any thing against Doctor Richard; please do not."

Bella sat quietly by the bed for a while; then Clodwig begged her to go to rest, and she complied. When he was again alone with Eric, he said, —

"In many painless hours by day and night, I have fancied to myself how the human race of to-day will gather in countless hosts, and press, shoulder to shoulder, up some lofty height, to plant the banner under which they assemble. What watch-word can they inscribe upon it which shall unite them one and all? Then I saw you; you were carrying the banner, and on it was your motto, your words which you have spoken, the only motto, Free labor! That is it. Happy are you that you have said it, and I that I have heard and seen."

A glorious light rested on Clodwig's countenance, and beamed from his eyes, as he gazed into the empty air; then he laid back his head, and closed his eyes, but he felt for Eric's hand, and clasped it tight. After a while he raised himself again, saying, —

"Go into the room that you had when you first came here; take Robert with you, and bring the bust of the Victoria here to me."

Eric went with the servant to the balcony chamber, and had the head of the Victoria taken down; that of the Medusa lay upon the floor in fragments. He asked Robert who had broken it, but Robert knew nothing about it. He hesitated to ask Bella or Clodwig about the matter, but he learned that Clodwig had not been in this room since his return.

When Eric had placed the bust opposite the sick man's bed, and arranged the lights properly, Clodwig said, —

"Yes, it looks like her, your mother knew her too."

He said nothing more. After he had gazed at the bust for a long time in silence, he asked Eric to call the Banker, and, when he came, he said to him with a child-like smile, —

"It belongs to you too. There's a story about a little child, very young, I can see him now, dressed only in a little shirt, sitting on a cushion on the table, and my mother is holding me, and telling me — I think I can feel the warm breath of her words, as it comes against my breast, she had laid her head on my breast, and she said, 'There was once a child who went into the woods to look for flowers, and he found beautiful red flowers, and picked them; and then he found beautiful blue flowers, and he threw the pretty red flowers away, and

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gathered the blue ones; and then he found beautiful yellow ones, and threw away the beautiful blue flowers to gather those; and next he found beautiful white ones; and he threw the pretty yellow ones away, and picked the white; and then he came out of the wood, and there was a brook; and he threw the lovely white flowers into the brook, and had nothing left in his hands.' That is my story, and that is the other one. I understand it now. The nations all came upon the earth, and they held the revelations in their hands,— the red, the blue, the yellow, and the white flowers — and at last they stood with nothing but their empty hands. And then they said, 'It is well.' The empty hands speak, and say, 'Unforced labor shalt thou perform.' Isn't it true, Eric, that I understand what you said when you first came here? I see you now as you stood under the blossoming apple-tree, and your words came to me like my mother's warm breath on my little breast. And now may you sleep well. Good-night."

Eric sat by Clodwig's bed, with his hand clasped in his, till at last the grasp relaxed, and the sick man slept. Bella came again, and Pranken with her; he prayed with the Sister of Mercy for the dangerously sick man, doing it without shyness or display, with unembarrassed air.

Eric made a sign to Bella to be very quiet. She sat silent for a time, and then withdrew with Pranken.

Eric struggled with sleep and weariness. The morning dawned, and flooded the chamber with its ruddy light. Eric went to the Sister of Mercy, and told her that the long sleep of their patient made him uneasy: he had leaned over him, and could hear no breathing; but perhaps it was on account of his own exhaustion.

They went to Clodwig's bed-side, and bent over him — death had come to him in his sleep.

CHAPTER XV.

A GOOD CONCLUSION TO A BAD RESULT.

Eric had Pranken called, and charged him with the duty of informing his sister; but Pranken insisted that they should let Bella sleep as long as she would, as she needed the strength. So the dawning day grew brighter and brighter, and the Sister of Mercy sat praying by the bedside of him who had fallen asleep.

Eric went down into the garden, where he met the Banker: he silently gave him his hand, and they walked on together without speaking. Eric was called in to Bella, who was upon the sofa, weeping. The Sister of Mercy had broken the news to her when she woke. Bella had been with the corpse, and now was mourning loud and immoderately. Eric consoled her, requesting that she would excuse his absence for a few hours, as he must see how they all were at the Villa, and would return by evening.

He rode homewards.

At the foot of the mountain, Claus met him with his son, the Cooper; and the field-guard cried, —

"Good luck, Herr Captain! good luck for you; and you are good luck for us too. We've just bought the Carp Inn for Ferdinand. Could there be any thing better? I'm father of an inn."

Eric hushed him, but could not get in a word; for Claus exclaimed, —

"Do you know that now Sevenpiper's going to let his daughter marry Ferdinand? and it's all owing to you."

"Me?"

"Yes, indeed. If the rich Sonnenkamp can let his daughter marry a teacher, Sevenpiper can give his daughter to the Cooper. Isn't that so? O Herr Captain! you are a good luck for us all. And here, Herr Captain, here's my hand: I'll drink not a drop more after to-day, except when I'm thirsty: mayn't I quench my thirst? Thank heaven, I've got a very good thirst. But at the wedding I'll have a time of it; for nobody can go it like the Screamer. Come along with me, Herr Captain, put up your horse, we've a good stable, it's a first-rate inn."

Eric could not reconcile the contradiction: he comes from a death-bed into the very midst of jollity. He told Claus nothing of Clodwig's decease, and only begged to be allowed to ride on, and so left them.

He reached Villa Eden.

"Has Bella any female friend with her," the Professorin asked, as soon as she learned of Clodwig's death.

Eric said that she had not. It was painful to the Professorin that she could not render any assistance and consolation to Bella. Bella had triumphed in the fact, that, self-contained, she had been more feared than loved by women; and now, in her time of affliction, she had no one whose right and dutiful privilege it was to come to her, that she might lay her head, weighed down with sorrow and tears, upon a friendly bosom. But Aunt Claudine said to Eric, —

"When you drive to Wolfsgarten again, take me with you."

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Manna begged Eric to rest; but Eric saw that there was no rest for him, for he received very soon a note from Bella by a messenger, in which were these words, written in great haste, —

"You must come immediately to bear witness for me. I am ruined and disgraced."

Eric drove to Wolfsgarten. Aunt Claudine accompanied him, and Professor Einsiedel had offered his services also; but the Mother and Manna urged him to remain with them. The Professor was a consolation and a quiet support for them at the Villa. Eric promised to return that night. What can have happened at Wolfsgarten in these few hours since Clodwig's death?

They came to Wolfsgarten. The servants stood around, and looked shyly at Eric; one of them saying, — Eric heard it very distinctly, —

"Who knows whether he has not helped do it?"

The Sister of Mercy came to meet Eric, and said to him hurriedly, —

"A horrible thing has happened. The layer-out of the corpse, in removing the clothes, found a wound upon the Count's neck, and has called the coroner: now it is said that Count Clodwig was strangled. You were present until the very last breath, you are involved in the most horrible suspicion. Inconceivable, incomprehensible! If the Doctor would only come! We have despatched messengers everywhere for him; but he is not to be found."

Bella had heard of Eric's arrival, and pulled incessantly at the bell: she desired that he would come to her. Eric requested Aunt Claudine to remain in the lower room, where the Banker was still sitting quietly, and went with the Sister of Mercy to Bella.

"Leave us alone together for a moment," begged Bella. "No, that would excite suspicion. Remain." — "Foh! suspicion!" shrieked Bella. "You men are all hypocrites. Let the world say what it will, leave us alone. Every thing is a lie, and he was a liar too."

Eric was alone with Bella who said, —

"I have received a punishment more horrible than the most cunning Devil could ever have contrived. Herr Dournay, it is said that I, Bella Pranken, have strangled my husband, — I have sacrificed my life to be now suspected of this! Here I stand: whatever I have done, whatever I have thought, now is it a thousand-fold atoned for. And I curse it that I have been faithful. He wore the picture of another woman on his heart until his heart ceased to beat."

"The Doctor is here," was suddenly called outside.

The Doctor and Pranken entered; and the Doctor said, —

"I know the whole. This blockhead of a coroner! Every ignorant person knows that a wound on a corpse is a very different thing from one on a living body. There is only a trifling mark, a little abrasion of the skin on the Count's neck. Can't you tell me what made this?"

Bella now narrated that Robert had come to ask her whether they should leave the picture, which the Count wore on his heart, to be buried with him. She asked what sort of a picture it was, and was told that it was that of a lady. Hurrying there in her excitement, which she now lamented, she had snatched from the corpse the picture which was hung by a small cord about the neck.

"It was the miniature of his deceased wife: here it is," said she. She pointed to a gentle face, on a thin plate of gold.

The Doctor and Eric looked at the picture, and then at Bella. Eric thought to himself, "This was why he had the bust of the Victoria brought to his bedside. Wonderful likeness!"

The Doctor said that they must not make known publicly this passionate act of the Countess as the occasion of the coroner's mistake. He begged them to fall in with his explanation, that some of the caustic medicine which the invalid had taken had dropped down about the string, and caused this abrasion.

To his horror, Eric now recollected that Clodwig had exhorted him to take something from his bosom after he was dead. He told of this now; and the Doctor and Bella shook their heads.

The Doctor requested Bella, Eric, Pranken, the Banker, and the Sister of Mercy to go with him into the chamber of death. He had all the servants called, and rebuked the coroner sharply, pointing out to him that only the outer skin had been reddened by a caustic medicine.

Eric cast one more look at the dead body of his friend. Even the statue of the Victoria, that stood opposite, seemed to look in sorrow upon it.

The gentlemen led Bella back into her chamber. Aunt Claudine entered. Bella extended her left hand to her, while with the right she held a handkerchief pressed to her face. The gentlemen went down to

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receive the King's private physician, whose carriage was just driving into the court. Doctor Richard stated in few words the cause of Clodwig's death, which was the result of a cold, together with great mental excitement. They then all repaired to the room looking on the garden, whither Doctor Richard ordered wine to be brought, and insisted on Eric's drinking with them, as he would need to use every means to keep up his strength.

"Drink," he said, "you cannot do without it. Great demands are making upon you now, and the machine must be fed with wine."

Eric drank, but he drank a tear with the wine; for tears fell from his eyes into the glass. He left the room for a moment, and returned with a little box in which, he said, were Clodwig's orders, which his friend had commissioned him to return to the Prince. As his presence was necessary now at the Villa, he requested the court-physician to undertake the commission for him; to which he readily assented, adding, that in Clodwig a nobleman had been taken away, whose memory was a source of strength to them all: the moderation and perfect balance of his nature, his repose and gentleness, were characteristics which belonged to a generation that was passing away.

Doctor Richard, who was sitting in an arm-chair, with his legs crossed one over the other, exclaimed, —

"All that is true: the expression, 'He was too noble for this world,' might be used with truth of him. He had the advantage, or the disadvantage, of viewing every individual thing in its connection with humanity; and, as to the thing itself, it was a matter of perfect indifference to him, whether it was done to-day or to-morrow, by you or anybody else. He might have accomplished great things, have exerted a wide-spread influence; but the task seemed to him too hard, and he excused himself from it. Every event, every experience, was made subservient to the development of his beautiful character. Good, beautiful, lofty, but a childless, barren existence is that, whose mother is a philosophy which accepts all things, comprehends all things, only to reduce them afterwards to a system. I have often reproached him with that while he lived; and I venture to do the same now that he is dead."

"He repeated to me once an expression of yours, Captain Dournay," said the Banker. "You once said to him, 'Man has to do railway duty on the earth;' and the words made a great impression on him. So it is, we all have to act more or less as guards on the swiftly-rolling train of our generation; but it is not every one who is fitted for the post."

There was much that Eric wanted to say, and he might have explained many points; for what had Clodwig not discussed with him? But he had no chance to speak; for the doctor cried, —

"I do not believe that I am inclined to find fault with this man. Of all in the wide world who will hear of his death, and mourn for him, not one respected him more than I."

Some reference was made to the horrible suspicion which had fallen upon Bella; but the Doctor repeated emphatically that this was a monstrous mistake, and heartily regretted that nothing could be done to efface all remembrance of it; for men would always hold fast to such a calumny, at least, they would not wholly forget it.

Pranken entered with a clergyman of the neighborhood, who finally consented, after much persuasion on the part of Pranken and the royal physician, to pronounce a benediction over the body.

The Doctor presently drove off with the Court-physician: and, soon afterward, Eric also departed, with the Banker and Aunt Claudine; for Bella had requested to be left alone.

They looked back sorrowfully at the mansion, from whose summit a black flag was now waving.

For two days, Clodwig's body lay upon satin cushions in the great drawing-room, exposed to the public gaze. His countenance was peaceful. He was surrounded by palms and flowers, and candles burned at the side of the coffin.

People from the whole country round flocked to take a last look at Clodwig; some from respect, and some from curiosity. Bella could hear them say as they left the house, "He shows no signs of having been strangled."

On the third day, Eric, the Justice, the Banker, the Major, the chief men of the city, besides an ambassador from the King, and several high officers of state, followed Clodwig's body to the tomb of the Wolfsgartens.

The bells rang from mountain and valley: it was the funeral of the last of the Wolfsgartens.

Sonnenkamp had meant to make one of the funeral-procession: he had actually started for Wolfsgarten; but he was not to be seen among the mourners.

The Major said to Eric that Sonnen-

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kamp was right not to be present: he would have attracted too much attention; and have destroyed the solemnity of the occasion.

Sonnenkamp spent the whole day in the village inn near by. He knew that, wherever he showed himself, he would excite curiosity and horror, and hid himself as well as he could, behind a large newspaper, which he pretended to be reading. He could hear the talk of the men in the public room without; and the chief speaker among them was a Jew, a cattle-dealer, who said, —

"That Herr Sonnenkamp never gave us a chance to earn any thing. Very fine of him, wonderfully fine! What ill report has not been circulated of us Jews! But we never trafficked in slaves!"

The conversation, however, soon took a different turn; and they spoke of the report of the Countess having murdered her husband, which was true, they said, for all the doctor's maintaining that the red mark about the dead man's throat was caused by a little cord on which he always wore the picture of his first wife.

A sudden light flashed into Sonnenkamp's face at hearing this charge against Bella thus insisted upon. If any thing could drive her to a decision, it was this. Bella's indignation at the suspicion must be favorable to his plans. "The chief thing," he said to himself, "will be to get her to discuss the matter: the moment she does that, she is won."

Finally, Lootz returned, whom Sonnenkamp had sent to gain intelligence of every thing that was going on.

CHAPTER XVI.

AWAY UNDER FIERY RAIN!

A DAMP, autumnal fog penetrated Clodwig's sick-room through the open windows, and lay in drops on the brow of the statue of Victory.

Still and desolate it was at Wolfsgarten: even Pranken had gone.

Bella sat in her room enveloped in her mourning weeds. She had black bracelets on her wrists, and had just been trying on her black gloves. She drew them off now, laid her hands together, and gazed with that terrible Medusa look into vacancy, into the future, into the great blank. "You are alone," said a voice within her; "you were always alone in yourself, in the world, — a solitary nature; lonely as wife, always alone."

Once more her cheeks flamed with sudden rage to think that any one, the veriest fool, could for an instant imagine that she had murdered her husband. Was it for this that she had so long crushed every impulse of her heart? Would the world after all not believe in her happiness? She went in imagination from house to house of the capital, and heard her name on all tongues.

The ticking of the clock reminded her of what Clodwig had once said, "The pendulum of our life vibrates between recollections of the past, and desires for the future." — "That was true of him, but not of me: I do not stand between recollection and desire: I want the present. I crave life, ardent life."

She rose, and was vexed that she could not resist going to her mirror; but once there she staid, and was still more vexed to see that her figure was not as slender as it used to be; and yet black makes one look slender. She seemed to have lost all her charms! Her thoughts went further: since he had to die before you, why could he not have died years ago, while you were still beautiful? She shuddered at the thought, but the next moment commended her own sincerity. Further spoke the voice within her, and, proudly raising her head, she said almost aloud to herself, —

"I care nothing for conventionality. What I may think a year hence, I will think now, to-day. What to me is the world's division of time? Thoughts that others would have a year hence, I permit myself to-day. Yes; you are a widow, who will be visited only from compassion, — a widow, with none to stand by her. And then this degrading suspicion! I can go to the capital; I can take a house. Oh, what a god-like destiny! I am myself a house, and shall be made lady president of a soup establishment, and shall have a select dozen of orphans in blue aprons come to my funeral. I have had enough of that sort of thing already. No! I cannot live alone. Shall I travel again, seek forgetfulness and fancied pleasure in landscapes, crowds, works of art, and then talk, laugh, play in society? I have proved it all vanity, emptiness. Prince Valerian could be won. But could I play the hypocrite again in a strange world, and charitably rejoice that the Russian peasants are, figuratively, to have their hair curled? The Wine-cavalier would be very complaisant, always making his bows, and paying his devotions: it is only manner to be seen,

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but then the manner is good, agreeable, and — false, the whole of it!

"No, no! I must away into conflict, into war, danger, distress; but life, mighty, all-absorbing life, I must have. I scorn the whole world; I hurl back in its face its honors, its caprices of philanthropy."

A horseman gallops into the court-yard, a tall figure in black. Is it not Sonnenkamp? What can he want?

Sonnenkamp was announced.

"He is welcome," was her answer.

Sonnenkamp entered.

"Countess," he said, "I bring back to you what once I received from you, — the courage of a hero."

"Ah, courage! I am in humiliation; deserted, broken, weak."

"You humiliated deserted, weak? You kindled in me a strength great enough to defy the world: I am young again, fresh again. Countess, in this bitter and critical hour I come to you, only to you. You alone are now the world to me; you alone make the world of value to me; I would gladly give you something, be to you something, that shall make the world seem precious to you again."

Bella stood motionless, and he continued:

"Raise yourself above this hour, above this year, above this country, above all conventionalities. If it be possible for any human being to do this, you are that one.

"Bella, I might tell you that I would escape into the wide world; would sacrifice, destroy every thing ruthlessly; put from me wife, children, all, only on condition that you would follow me, that you would dare to turn your back upon every thing, and be a free, independent nature: I might tell you that, and it would be true. But it is not that which should decide you. It is not for me you should live, but for yourself. Bella, we read in old histories of men and women who bound themselves together by a crime: such unions seldom last. I see your soul open before me — no, I have it within me, and speak from it. You say as I do, 'Here I am in conflict with the world. The world requires concern for others, and I have the spirit of egoism; I am no philanthropist, I am no charitable institution.' You desire, as I do, to assert self; I desire a thing for you, only because I desire it for myself. Others would decoy you, persuade you with honeyed phrases; I honor you too highly: you have courage to be yourself."

"I do not understand you. What do you mean? What do you desire for yourself; what do you desire for me?"

"For myself, what have I left to desire? A bullet through my head. But there is one thing which can save me."

"What is that?'

"It is yourself. To show you what greatness is, to see you great — for that I would still gladly live and fight. If there is such a thing as admiration, as bowing before what is noble, before a world-subduing genius, I" —

He made a motion, a step forward. Bella regained composure, and said quietly, —

"Be seated."

A singular expression passed over his face at the words; but he seated himself, and continued, —

"Countess, I know not what plans you may have — yet no: I think I do know your present plans. Do not interrupt me; let me speak. If I have been mistaken in you, then is my whole life, then are all my thoughts, my efforts, my conflicts, nothing but madness, and the pathetic declaimers of lofty phrases are in the right. Countess Bella, you once said a noble thing to me: 'A resolute nature knows no family, must have no family.' That is my guiding star. I have no longer a family; I am nothing in the world but myself; and you — you should be nothing but yourself. You have never been yourself till now; but now you ought, you can, you must be."

"I will. You are a wonderful man; you clear away all the rubbish that clogs my being. Speak further; what do you bring?"

"I bring nothing but myself, Countess; I have put away from me all the ties of this world; I say this to you, to none but you. This very day I depart for the New World. Yes, there is a new world yonder!"

Sonnenkamp suddenly rose, and seized her hand.

"Countess, you are a great woman: yours is a nature born to rule. Come with me, you have the courage for it. There is a throne to be established in the New World; and upon this throne will I set you as queen. Come!"

There was a tone of authority, of command, in Sonnenkamp's voice, as he grasped her by the hand. She rose; her lips trembled, her eyes sparkled.

"I thank you," she said. "You are great, and you fancy greatness in me. That is it. I thank you. O my friend, we are weak, pitiful creatures. Too late, too late! Why does such a call come too late? Ten years ago, I should have had the strength for it; then it would have tempted me; I would have risked every thing then, and taken the chance of shame

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and death; any thing had been better than this maimed, idle, good-for-nothing, musty, relic-hunting, sickly, sanctimonious — no, I did not mean to say that — and yet — I thank you. You pay me a higher honor than was ever paid me before: you recognize what I might have been; but I cannot be it now. Too late!"

"Too late!" cried Sonnenkamp, seizing both her hands. "Bella, you say, that, if I had come in your youth, you would have gone with me into the wide world. Bella, Countess, we are young so long as we will to be. You are young, and I will be young. When you came to me that time in the spring, I gave you a rose, a centifolium, and said to you, you are not like this flower. And you are not like it; for your bloom is ever fresh; your will, your strength, blossoms. Be courageous; be yourself; be your own. What are seventy maimed, idle years? One year full of life is more than they all."

Bella sank back in her chair, and covered her face with her handkerchief.

"Why did you appeal to the Court," she said at length, "if you meant to leave before sentence was pronounced?"

"Why? I thank you for the question. I am free: henceforth I can speak the honest truth, and to you above all others. For a while, I really believed that this would offer me a way of escape. But I soon abandoned that idea, and now" —

He paused.

"And now?" repeated Bella.

"I wanted to show these puppets, these children who are always giving themselves up to leading-strings which they call religion or morality or politics, — I wanted to show them what a free human being was, an undisguised egoist. That tempted me. When the time came for putting my plan into execution, it was only for your sake that I carried out what I had proposed; for you only I laid bare my whole life. I I was resolved you should know who I am. I hardly spoke to the men who were before me; I spoke to you; behind myself, above myself, I spoke to you, Bella."

"Were you then already decided not to wait for the sentence?"

Sonnenkamp nodded with a smile of triumph. There was a long pause. He held her hand firmly. At last she asked hesitatingly, —

"Would not my flight confirm the injurious suspicion, the suspicion that Clodwig was" —

"Fie!" interrupted Sonnenkamp; "as if it would not have been easier to desert a living husband than to murder him first!"

Bella shuddered at the words, and Sonnenkamp exclaimed, —

"O Bella! noble soul, alone great among women, cast away all these European casuistries; with a single step put this whole, old-maidish Europe behind you!"

A still longer pause followed: there was no sound but the screaming of the parrot.

"When do you start?" asked Bella.

"To-night, by the railway."

"No, by boat. Is no boat going?"

"Certainly; one this very night."

"I will go with you. But leave me now, leave me. Here is my hand, I go with you."

She sat motionless, her hands folded, her eyes closed. Sonnenkamp took her hand firmly in his, touched her wedding-ring, and drew it gently from her finger.

"What are you doing?" exclaimed Bella in sudden passion. Her eyes were fixed on Sonnenkamp; she saw the ring in his hand.

"Let me keep it as a pledge," he urged.

"What do you mean? We are not people to make a scene. Give it to me."

He gave back the ring; but she did not return it to her finger.

That night, a steamer stopped at the little town; there was a storm of wind and rain, and the engine screeched and hissed. On the wharf stood a man wrapped in his cloak, and presently a tall veiled figure passed him.

"Leave me to myself!" the woman said as she hurried by.

A plank was laid across from the steamer: the woman crossed it, followed by the man.

The plank was drawn up, the boat turned, and steamed away into the darkness and the storm. No one was on deck except those two figures: the sailors made haste into the cabin. The pilot, wrapped in his suit of India-rubber, whistled softly to himself as he turned the wheel.

The tall figure of the woman, muffled in black, stood upon the deck of the steamer as it shot down the stream. Long she stood, abstractedly gazing at the water and the towns and villages on the shore, with here and there a light flashing from the window-panes, and casting a swiftly-vanishing gleam upon the river. A fiery shower, a stream of bright sparks from the chimney, swept over the figure. A hand appeared from under the folds of the cloak; it held a ring between its fingers for a while, then dropped it into the stream below.

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BOOK XIV. CHAPTER I.

MANY KINDS OF LOVE.

THE modest little dwelling of the Major became once more the place where all sought rest and found it.

As Eric had first gone to the Major to tell him of his happiness, so the Cooper also, and his betrothed, first sought the Major and Fräulein Milch, to tell their new-found joy.

Here they met Knopf, who was an especial favorite with Fräulein Milch, because he had a faculty for being taken care of; and besides he had brought her a great many books in former days, and instructed her in many things. He must always be the young ladies' school-teacher, even with Fräulein Milch.

When Knopf heard of Eric's betrothal with Manna, he said, —

"That is the way! It is the old story over again, — the story of the maiden freed from enchantment, which is a great favorite here on the Rhine. This is a new version of it. Only a youth as pure as Dournay could have set the pure virgin free."

He spoke in a kind of low, dreamy mysterious tone, which so touched the Major's heart, that he fell upon the speaker's neck, embraced and kissed him, and cried, —

"You must enter our society. You must speak so there. That is the place for you."

Knopf had come to fulfil Weidmann's commission, and to make some inquiries of Eric about the black man Adams. When the Cooper and his betrothed entered, and the Major gave them his blessing, and Fräulein Milch brought in a bottle of wine, Knopf was the merriest of the company. He could not fully say what was in his heart; but he laid his hand on the tablets in his breast-pocket, which meant, "Here is another beautiful romance for me to write down. Ah, how beautiful the world is!"

Into the midst of this joyful company came the tidings of Sonnenkamp's flight.

"And we have not yet passed sentence upon him!" cried the Major.

Fräulein Milch smiled knowingly at the Major, as much as to say, "Did I not tell you he was making fools of you?"

Without waiting to finish their wine, the Major and Knopf hurried to the Villa.

Eric was busy with the notary, and they had to wait some time before they could speak with him.

The notary had brought Eric a paper in Sonnenkamp's handwriting, which declared that he had taken with him all the property made in slave-traffic; he appointed Weidmann and Eric guardians of his children, and arranged for Roland's being declared of age in the spring.

Another messenger came from Weidmann bringing the good news, that, according to a letter just received from Doctor Fritz, Abraham Lincoln had been elected President.

The thought passed through Eric's mind, that there might be some connection between this event and Sonnenkamp's flight.

He had no time to dwell upon the idea, for immediately after Weidmann's messenger had been admitted, the Major and Knopf entered.

News followed hard upon news. A telegram arrived, desiring Eric to go to the city and wait at the telegraph-office, as some one wished to communicate with him. The despatch was signed, "The Man from Eden."

Eric requested the Major to stay with his mother and send for Fräulein Milch to join him; at the same time he begged Knopf to bring Roland home, and prepare him as gently as he could for what had happened.

From every side, fresh difficulties poured in upon Eric. How every thing had come together! Clodwig's death, Sonnenkamp's flight, the fate of Roland, the fate of Manna — all weighed upon his heart.

As he was mounting his horse, he fortunately descried Professor Einsiedel, to whom he told in a few words what had happened, and begged him to stay with Manna.

He rode to the city. A despatch awaited him, telling that in an hour he should receive some definite tidings.

This suspense was most trying to Eric: he knew not what steps he should take next.

He walked through the city: everywhere were men and women safe in the privacy of their homes, while he and his seemed cast out into the street. He lingered long before the Justice's house. Lina was singing her favorite song from "Figaro;" and the words, "that I with roses may garland thy head," were given so feelingly, with so much suppressed emotion, that Eric's breath came hard as he listened. He knew just how it looked up there in the sitting-room. The Architect was leaning back in the red arm-chair, while his betrothed sang to him; flowers were blooming in the window; and the whole atmosphere was rich with music and perfume.

Unwilling to disturb their comfort by his heavy thoughts, he returned to the telegraph-station, and left word that he should

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be sent for at the hotel if any despatch came for him.

He sat alone in a dark corner and waited. The guests were gathered about the long table with their glasses of beer before them. Their talk was dry, and seemed to make the liquor the more refreshing. Eric forced himself to listen to their chat. They talked of Paris, of London, of America; one man was going to one place, another to another, a third was coming back: the free, mobile character of the Rhineland people was spread out before him; they live as if always floating on their native stream.

Suddenly the cry was raised, —

"Hurrah! here comes the story-teller."

Eric recognized the man who had been a great favorite with all ever since he had spent his first night in the city, at the Doctor's house. He had one of those faces, red with constant drinking, whose color makes it impossible to distinguish any age short of forty, and his countenance was as mobile as if made of gutta-percha.

The new-comer winked to the bar-maid, who knew what kind of liquor he drank; then he established himself comfortably in a chair, threw open his wraps, and drew some cigar-ends out of his pocket.

"What's the news?" asked the guests.

The man gave the usual answer: "Fair weather, and nothing beside."

"Where have you been for these three days, that we have seen nothing of you?"

"Where a man can prolong his life."

"What sort of a place is that?"

"I have been in the dullnesses of the capital: and there you can prolong your life; for every day is as long as two."

"Old, old!" cried the drinkers. "Give us something new!"

"Something new! I tell you many lies have no truth in them, and those often the best. But go out among the boats yonder; there's a jolly life going on in the cabin. Each one brings his own cook-book to the wedding, and then they marry the messes together."

The speaker was ridiculed on all sides for having nothing but such nonsense, such dry husks, to give them.

"If you will keep quiet, I will tell you a story; but first, one of you must go out to the Rhine, that he may be able to bear me witness afterwards that my story is true, as the old forester says."

A cooper was sent out to the boat that lay at anchor in the Rhine, and, after letting him know what he was to inquire about, the man began, —

"I do have the luck of falling in with the best stories! they come without my looking for them."

"Let us hear! let us hear! Is it about that big Sonnenkamp, or about the handsome Countess?"

"Ah, bah! that would be stale: this is one fresh from the oven. It is called the loves of the 'Lorelei' and the 'Beethoven,' or a sucking pig as matchmaker. Oh, yes! you may laugh, but you will see that it is all true. To begin, then. You know the steward of the 'Lorelei?' — the great Multiplication-table they call him. A man of standing he is, and an honest one, too; for he honestly confesses, that, by a skilful adding up of accounts, he has added together a pretty little property for himself. Now, he is single, frightfully so. He can eat and drink, but" —

"Yes, yes; we know him. What next?"

"Don't interrupt me. I must not anticipate my story: it is enough for me if I know it myself. So, then, the state of the case is this: the captain of the 'Lorelei,' you know him, that tall Baumlange, he was steersman on board the 'Adolph' for some years; he managed to make his cook's mouth water for the stewardess of the 'Beethoven,' a round, dainty little body, and two years a widow. Greetings were exchanged between the paper cap and the muslin; but they never spoke together except for a few minutes a fortnight ago at Cologne, when the 'Lorelei' and the 'Beethoven' lay side by side. Since that time, the great Multiplication-table smiled graciously upon the 'Lorelei,' but would not hear of marriage. His great delight is to get up a nice little dish that no one should know any thing about; and so one day he prepared a neat little sucking-pig, that was to be roasted on the morrow. Now, his captain knew, that the next day, and that is to-day, the two boats would anchor here together for the night: so he steals the pig, and hands it to a fellow-captain, who, in turn, delivers it to the widow of the 'Beethoven,' with directions to serve it up nicely, and something else with it, which order she obeys with a good will. Then the Captain invites his steward to supper on board the 'Beethoven;' and, since the stewardess has furnished the meat, it was but fair that the 'Lorelei' Multiplication-table should add the wine. They sit down to supper on board the 'Beethoven,' the stewardess of course, with them, and all goes on merrily The Multiplication-table said a pig could not be better served, and that it was almost as fine a one as his. Then the trick came out; but they took it in good part, and the

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upshot of it all was, that the two were betrothed over the little pig."

The story-teller had got thus far in his tale, when the cooper returned with the Captain of the 'Lorelei,' who confirmed the whole history. The merriment became noisy and riotous; and the Captain told how the newly-betrothed couple were sitting together, and how the same tastes were in both of them. They collected all the gold they could in the summer, and now they were sitting and laughing together as they polished it up with soap-suds.

Eric listened to it all as if he were in another world. There are still those, then, who can take life lightly: a change for the better must come in time.

Now the pilot entered, who, as custom required, had been taken on board the steamer for a little while, to steer it through the part of the stream he was familiar with. He amazed the company by telling them that, the night before, in the storm, the Countess von Wolfsgarten and Herr Sonnenkamp had gone down the river: he had recognized them both distinctly.

Eric had risen from his seat to question the man further, when he was summoned to the telegraph station. The despatch, which was signed, like the first, "the man from Eden," was to the effect that the writer was to sail the next morning for the New World, and that if, in the course of a year, no further tidings were received from him, he might be considered dead. It almost seemed as if the last part of the telegram could not have been correctly written; for the question was asked, whether Frau Ceres was living, and in what condition. In case of wishing to send any news of her to the New World, the name of a Southern paper was given, in which a paragraph should be inserted over the initials S. B.

While Eric was still holding the despatch in his hand, Pranken entered, and signed to him to come into an adjoining room. "I was in search of you," he said. He looked pale and agitated, and Eric was fully prepared to receive a challenge. His first question, however, was, whether Eric knew whither Sonnenkamp had fled, and how he could be addressed. Eric replied that he was not at liberty to answer that question.

"Ask him then whether" — he could hardly bring his lips to utter what he had to say, — "ask him whether there is anyone with him. No, better still, give me his address."

Eric repeated that he was not at liberty to do so. Pranken gnashed his teeth with rage.

"Very well: ask him yourself, then, whether any one is with him about whom I have a right to inquire."

As the two stood side by side, looking out upon the landscape, it suddenly flashed through Eric's mind, that in this very room, at a table before this window, they had sat together that day over their new wine. Prompted by the feeling of gratitude that overpowered him, he said, —

"I regret sincerely that there should be such ill feeling between us."

"This is no time to speak of that — of that presently. If you will — no, I will ask no favors. You are to blame for all this wretched complication: you have made every one go wrong. This would never have happened but for you."

A cold shudder passed through Eric's frame. Was he in truth to blame for Bella's fall? There was an expression of humility in his face as he answered, —

"I am at your service; I am only waiting for a despatch."

"Good: I will wait with you."

Pranken left the room, and walked restlessly up and down the embankment without, until the despatch arrived, and Eric summoned him.

"Very well: now put my question."

"Will you repeat your question to me once more exactly?"

"How long since you became so slow of comprehension? This then, Tell Herr Sonnenkamp, or Banfield, that if, before twelve hours are over, he does not let me know where he is, I shall take his silence as a proof that — No! ask — outright — whether my sister is with him."

Pranken's lips trembled: he had grown sadly old in these few days. Here he was obliged to stand and beg for information from Sonnenkamp; information on what a subject, and at whose hands!

"Will you have the goodness," he added, "to send the answer to me at the parsonage?"

He left the room, mounted his horse, and rode away.

"Medusa sends greeting to Europe," was the answer Eric received.

As he was about to start for home, the Doctor came up: he also had heard of Bella's flight,

"That is a master-piece!" he cried. "Herr Sonnenkamp, with the most skilful diplomacy, could have done nothing better than that. Bella's flight and fall will eclipse every thing that he himself has done. This will divert tongues from him: all is eclipsed by this new development.

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His children, too, will be freed from the old scandal; for the fact of Bella Pranken's eloping with him will count for more than years of selling slaves. From this time we shall hear of nothing but that: all else is obliterated."

Eric did not believe that the fugitives had yet started for America.

Immediately on his return to the Villa, he was summoned to Manna.

"Have you news of him?" she said. "Is he living?"

"Yes."

"Is he alone?"

"No."

"That, too, must we have to bear!"

"Does your mother know?"

"She only knows that father has fled; and she keeps crying, 'Henry, Henry, come back!' For hours, she has kept saying those words over and over. It is incredible how her strength holds out. O Eric! when we were in your father's library, Roland said, 'In all these books is there a fate to compare with ours?'"

All Eric's attempts to soothe her were fruitless.

CHAPTER II.

THE CHILDREN OF MAMMON.

ROLAND arrived, and Herr Weidmann with him. He had heard of his father's flight, but not of Bella's. A great change had come over the boy in these four days, especially in the lines about his mouth: its childish expression had changed into one of pride and sadness, and his whole character had gained in firmness. He went directly to his mother, who had not once paused in her cry of, "Henry, Henry, come back! Henry, I will give you my ornaments: come back!"

She appeared not to have noticed Roland's absence, and showed no surprise now at seeing him. She only said, —

"Your father will soon come back: he is only gone for a vessel, a great vessel; he sits at the helm, he guides" —

For the first time in his life, Roland was friendly and affectionate to Fräulein Perini, and thanked her warmly for her fidelity to his mother.

Fräulein Perini replied, that she was sure the young master would treat her kindly, and not forget her services. Roland hardly understood her meaning.

He went to Manna, he went to the Professorin, and had for every one a word of encouragement.

The notary came, and, on being asked if he had received any further news, answered hesitatingly, and fell back upon his power of attorney.

Roland, Manna, Eric, and Weidmann were summoned into the great hall; and, as they entered the room which his father had left, Roland for the first time shed tears, and threw himself on his sister's neck. But he quickly recovered his composure.

The lawyer told them that he knew the secret of opening the great fire-proof safe that was built into the wall on one side of the room. The keys lay in the writing-desk, and the mysterious word which the letters must be made to spell before the keys would turn the locks, was Manna.

"My name!" cried Manna, more touched than she could tell at her father's thus opening the rich treasures of his wealth with her name. To the notary's amazement, she grasped Eric's hand.

A strange chill spread through the room as the great safe was opened.

On the top lay a little box labelled, "My last will and testament." They opened it. A sealed paper lay in it on which was written, "To be opened immediately after my death." These words, however, had been erased, and beneath them was written, "To be opened six months after my disappearance.

Every thing was in perfect order. In different compartments lay the notes of hand, state bonds of all the countries in Europe, and more still of America, deeds of mining companies and of various banking-houses; there were papers of every sort and color: all the shades of the rainbow were represented.

Roland and Manna hardly heard the great sums that were named. They fixed their eyes with the curiosity of children upon separate valuable documents as they were taken out. That is money then —

Manna turned to Eric, with a timid entreaty that he would do and say in her place all that was necessary: she felt her head growing dizzy.

Eric replied, that he hoped she would not have the affectation of those persons who receive thoughtlessly the burden of great wealth without being willing to learn their own position in the world.

"I do not understand," said Manna. In view of all these great possessions she addressed him for the first time by the familiar German "Thou" in the presence of others.

"You will soon learn to understand it. We are children of the actual world; and,

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if we cannot preserve our ideality in the midst of the actual world, we have no ideality. We will learn together to use aright this immense wealth. This is the first time, too, that I ever saw such a vast amount."

"It is a great thought that the whole world is made up of debtors and creditors," exclaimed Roland.

Still greater was the amazement of the children when the lower drawer was opened, which, being on casters, was easily drawn out in spite of its great weight.

Here lay piles of gold from the mint, and gold in bars.

Roland and Manna involuntarily knelt down, like little children, and felt of it. After the notary had sat down to his writing in the adjoining room, and Eric and Weidmann had been called away, they remained still upon the floor, gazing wonderingly at the gold and then in one another's faces. Manna was the first to recover her voice.

"Are we not like the children who lost their way in the wood, and stumbled upon hidden treasure? But" —

She could not finish her sentence; for what she wanted to say was, "an evil spirit guards the gold."

"Come," said Roland, "lay your hand here on mine and on the gold. This gold shall do good, only good, and always good, and shall make amends for the past. We swear it."

"Yes, we swear it," repeated Manna. "Ah! if only our father may not have to be suffering want out in the world, while we here have all things in abundance. Perhaps he is seeking a shelter, while these luxurious rooms are his own. Oh! why do men strive for riches, and sell their own brothers? O God, why dost thou suffer it? Take all that we have, and drive the iniquity out of the world."

The girl's tears fell upon the gleaming gold. Roland soothed her, and laid her head on his breast; and so the two children knelt in silence before the glittering gold.

"Now we have had enough of this," said Roland at last. "We must be strong: we have great duties before us."

Almost with an angry hand, he pushed in the heavy drawer; and as they rose to their feet, while the boy still had hold of the door of the great safe to shut it, the Major, Knopf, and the negro Adams, entered.

For a moment, Roland and Manna stood motionless: then Roland ran up to the black man, embraced him, and exclaimed with a loud cry, —

"Let this make atonement to your whole race, to all your brothers! Come, Manna; give him your hand, embrace him: we owe it to him."

Manna approached, but with difficulty held out her hand to him; she trembled as she did it.

Adams held her hand long and firmly; and a shiver, a shudder, which made her blood stand still, shot through her whole frame.

With a great effort she controlled herself, and said in English, she hardly knew why, —

"We welcome you as a brother."

"Yes," cried Roland, "you shall counsel us, you shall help us, we will do every thing through you."

Manna whispered to Roland that they would give Adams at once a handsome sum of money; but Roland explained, that, although they must undoubtedly provide generously for Adams, it would be better first to find out if he understood the proper use of money.

Manna looked at her brother in wonder.

The notary now came from the adjoining room. Eric and Weidmann returned, and signed a receipt for the whole amount.

Eric now learned for the first time that Roland had insisted on Adams being brought. Knopf said in an aside to Eric, that he might be proud of the boy: there was great strength of character in him. He had repeatedly said that he must show he felt no hatred towards the innocent cause of this great calamity, and that, instead of persecuting the negro, he was bound to show him kindness.

Weidmann urged Adams's immediate departure from the Villa, fearing the effect that a chance meeting with him might have upon Frau Ceres, associated as his appearance would be with recollections of her home. He advised the man's going with him to Mattenheim: but Roland begged that Adams might be allowed to remain till he himself went back to Mattenheim; and the Major joyfully agreed to take him home with him.

Eric was incensed that Knopf should have brought Adams at all; but Knopf told how he had met the negro on the way to the Villa, and, with an air of triumph, went on to tell what a model of knavery the fellow was. He had devised a plan for going to Sonnenkamp, openly expressing repentance for his deed, and offering to appear as a false witness, on condition of being handsomely paid for it. He was beside

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himself, therefore, when he learned that Sonnenkamp had fled, and his false testimony was of no value.

An important consultation took place in Sonnenkamp's room, upon the subject of a new enterprise which Weidmann had in contemplation. He was about to purchase a large estate three leagues from Mattenheim, in the direction of the mountains, and asked Roland and Eric if they would not invest a considerable sum in the land. He wanted to make the attempt to settle a new village there, in combination with an old design of his, of attracting artisans by establishing them on small pieces of land of their own.

Eric questioned whether they would have a right to use this money in a foreign land for the benefit of foreigners; and, besides, at present they were only stewards of the property.

Weidmann praised his caution, but convinced him that this was a safe investment, and one that would be of benefit to many. He promised not to act alone, but to take the advice of the Banker in the matter. Security should be given that the amount of capital invested should be set free again in a certain number of years.

That evening, Weidmann departed for Mattenheim with a great chest of gold.

Eric was to bring the papers to the city, and then deliver them into the Banker's keeping.

CHAPTER III.

A SON OF HAM.

On no one of the persons interested in Villa Eden, had the startling events that had taken place produced a greater impression than on the Major. He could find no rest at home, and, since hearing Sonnenkamp's statement, he had lost the best possession he had, — his sound, healthful sleep. He wandered about restlessly all day, often talking with Laadi, throwing the dog sometimes a mushroom fried in fat, and then punishing her severely when she tried to eat it. At night, his inward excitement was so great, that he kept talking in a low voice to himself, and occasionally even roused Fräulein Milch in the hope that she would dispel the disturbing thoughts. Sonnenkamp's flight, and now the news that Bella had gone with him, increased the distemper of his mind.

He summoned all his strength when Knopf brought in the negro, received him most cordially, and insisted upon his staying in his house first. Adams consented; and the Major took him at once to the castle, where the work was still going on.

Fräulein Milch confessed to Herr Knopf that she was oppressed by a fear she could not control, and begged him to stay with them; but he regretted that his duties to Prince Valerian made his stay impossible. So far from allaying Fräulein Milch's anxieties, he rather increased them by the satisfaction with which he dwelt upon the consummate knavery of this Adams.

"I take delight," he repeated, "in observing what a savage the fellow is. A savage nature is not soft, not good-natured, but sly as a tiger-cat. After all, how can you expect a slave to be a model of virtue, and an example of all that is good?"

The good-natured, soft-hearted Knopf took a real pleasure in knowing consummate rascals like Sonnenkamp and Adams. When he had discovered evil in a man, he carried it to extremes at once, like all idealists: the man must instantly be a consummate villain. The royal descent that Adams boasted of, was, according to him, nothing but a lie: he was usurping the character of some man of princely blood who had been drowned. "For," added Knopf, with great satisfaction, "he could not have taken the stamped sailing papers from him before he was launched on the sea of eternity."

He declared to Fräulein Milch that he had caught Adams in the lie; for the man had made a mistake in the dates: and Knopf was not a teacher of history, with all the dates at his tongue's end, for nothing.

On the Major's return with Adams, his disease fairly broke out, and he was obliged to take to his bed.

The Doctor came, and administered soothing remedies, which relieved the Major; but he had no soothing remedies for Fräulein Milch. She was to receive these from a man who had no knowledge of medicine. When the Professorin could not be with Fräulein Milch to relieve her loneliness, and keep up her courage, she sent Professor Einsiedel; and to him the poor woman confided all her uneasiness with regard to Adams. The man would engage in no occupation; he could drink and smoke all day; but that was all. He had worked only while he was a slave, and driven to it; and as lackey he had had nothing to do but to sit in fantastic livery upon the box of the royal coach. So there he remained in the house with Fräulein Milch, doing nothing but inspire her with an unconquerable terror. The greater her fear became,

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the more pains she took to preserve a friendly manner towards him.

Only to Professor Einsiedel did she complain of the presence of the negro.

"I must take care," she said, "not to let this one black man give me a prejudice against the whole race."

"What do you mean by that?"

Fräulein Milch blushed as she replied, —

"If we do not know a foreign nation, or a foreign race, and our preconceived notions of it are unfavorable, we are very apt to consider the solitary individual who may come under our observation as a representative of the whole, and to charge upon the whole his peculiar characteristics and faults. This Adams, now, is a man who will neither learn nor labor. As a slave, he was used to being taken care of, and as a lackey the same: it would be very unjust to let him prejudice me against the whole race, and to conclude that all negroes have these peculiarities."

"Very good, very reasonable," was the Professor's verdict. "But I should like to know how you come to be so carefully on your guard against prejudices. I know very little about women, to be sure; but I had supposed this quality was not common among them."

Fräulein Milch bit her lip. This acknowledgment of the claim of every individual to be judged by his own merits had had a peculiar origin in herself; but she could not tell it. She felt the Professor's keen glance fixed upon her face, and fancied he must have discovered her secret. She waited, expecting to hear it from his lips, but he was silent: after a pause, she continued, —

"Do you not think with me that the blacks will never be free until they free themselves, until a Moses appears from among their own number, and leads them out of bondage? And do you not think, also, that this generation which has been in bondage must perish in the wilderness, and that the new generation, that has grown up in freedom, will be the one to enter the promised land of freedom?"

"You seem very familiar with the Old Testament," said the Professor.

Fräulein Milch colored up to the border of her white cap.

"But you have the right idea," continued Professor Einsiedel. "I hope you understand me. The black race has developed nothing original: as far as we can yet see, it contributes nothing to the intellectual possessions of the human family. Certainly no outsider can free them; but our new age, the only redeemer which we acknowledge, culture, will reach and deliver them. Are you acquainted with the recent investigations into the Japhetic races?"

"Alas! no."

"Certainly; I forgot myself. But you must know that the sons of Ham, this, of course, you have learned from the Bible, are without a history: they bring nothing of their own conquest, acquisition, creation, into the great Pantheon. It is the Semitic, Japhetic races that must free the descendants of Ham.

The Professor was about to lay before Fräulein Milch the result of the latest investigations; to tell her what extraordinary discoveries had been made among the Egyptian papyri; how it was proved that the author or the compiler of the Bible had not understood Egyptian; in fact, that the contents of the Bible had existed before in Egyptian writings, and the deliverance of the slaves was the only one great act of the mythical Moses in the whole ancient world. In his delight at finding so good a listener, he was about to deliver himself at great length, when Claus came in, having been sent by the Doctor to take Adams home with him. Fräulein Milch whispered in his ear that he would have difficulty in making Adams work, at which he cried with a smile, —

"Yes, yes: slaves and rich men are alike in that. The slave does nothing because his master feeds him, and the rich man does nothing because his money feeds him."

Fräulein Milch impressed upon Claus that he must treat the black man kindly, and remember that he did not represent the black race. The field-guard laughed heartily, and carried Adams off to his house.

The dogs barked fiercely, and the women screamed in terror, when the negro appeared. The screams soon ceased; but, whenever Adams went out of the house, the dogs set up a fresh chorus of barks.

CHAPTER IV.

BELLA'S LEGACY.

When the Doctor came with the Professorin, he was highly rejoiced that Adams had left the house, and still more that the Major was able to sit up in bed, and smoke his long pipe. After enjoining upon him great quiet, he went with the two women into the sitting-room, and there informed them that he had reason to be proud; for Bella had written to him from Antwerp, and to no one

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else. He read the letter to them which was as follows, —

"You alone are no puppet; you never made a pretence of friendship for me, and therefore you shall have a keepsake. I give you my parrot. The parrot is the masterpiece of creation: he says nothing but what he is taught. Adieu!

"BELLA."

The ladies exchanged glances of surprise; and Fräulein Milch rejoiced the Doctor by saying, for once in her life, an unkind word; for she could not help expressing pleasure that Frau Bella had come to such an end. The Doctor, on the other hand, said, in a tone of complaint, —

"I feel a want now that she is gone. I miss in her a sort of barometer of thought and an interesting object of study. Strange! now that this woman is gone we see, for the first time, how widely her influence was extended, — more widely perhaps than was her due. But still the story pleases me, as a proof that there still exist persons of courage and strong will."

"You like eccentricity," suggested the Professorin.

"Oh, no! What seems eccentric to others appears to me the only natural and consistent course. Bella could not have acted otherwise than she has: this very step was a part of her heroism. Your son can tell you that I suspected something of this sort before it happened. There is much in common between Bella and Sonnenkamp. Both are quick and clear in judgment where others are concerned; but, when self is touched, they are tyrannical, malicious, and self-asserting. And, now that she is fairly gone, I may say that she has fled a murderess: to be sure, she did not kill Clodwig with poison or dagger, but she smote him to the heart with killing words and thoughts. He confessed to me that it was so, and now I may repeat it."

"I am confounded," said the Professorin. "With all her culture, how were such things possible?"

"That was just it," broke in the Doctor delighted. "All this intellectual life was nothing to Frau Bella: she found herself in it, she knew not how. She had to destroy something, or what would she have done with all this culture? Formerly there was hypocrisy only in religion; now there is hypocrisy in education. But, no: Frau Bella was no hypocrite, neither was she really ill-natured; she was simply crude."

"Crude?"

"Yes. Thought of others educates at once the heart and the mind; Frau Bella thought only and always of herself, of what she had to say and to feel."

"Do you think," asked the Professorin with some hesitation, "that these two persons can be happy together for a single hour?"

"Certainly not, according to our ideas of happiness. They have no real affection for each other: pride and disappointment, and a desire to shock the world, have induced them to make their escape together. There is one other motive which persons like us cannot enter into. I tried for a long time to discover it, and believe at last that I have succeeded: it is the conciousness of beauty. I am a beauty: that is a principle on which a whole system is founded. Other people are only made for the purpose of seeing and admiring the beauty. Bella committed an act of treason against herself when she married Clodwig: she could not have done it except in a moment of forgetfulness of this great principle. But how can we judge such people aright? The longer I live, the more clearly I see that human beings are not alike: they are of different species."

"You want to provoke us by heresies."

"By no means: that is the reason why this anti-slavery fever is distasteful to me. This claiming equality for all men is a wrong."

"A wrong?"

"Yes. Men are not all the same kind of beings; one is a nightingale that sings on a tree; another is a frog that croaks in the marsh. Now, to require of the frog that he should sing up in a tree is a wrong, a perversion of Nature. Let the frog alone in his marsh, he is very well off there, and to him and his wife his song sounds as sweet as that of the bird to his mate. Men are of different kinds."

The Major called from his room to know what the Doctor was talking so loudly and excitedly about. Fräulein Milch soothed him by telling him it was nothing for a sick man to hear, though she confessed that they had been talking of Bella. As she re-entered the sitting-room, a messenger arrived from Villa Eden with intelligence which summoned the Doctor and the Professorin thither instantly: Frau Ceres was dangerously ill.

The Doctor and the Professorin made all haste back to the Villa.

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CHAPTER V.

THE BLACK HORROR.

"HENRY, come! Henry, come back! these are your trees, and your house. Come back! I will dance with you. Henry, Henry!"

Such was Frau Ceres' incessant cry.

She refused all nourishment; she insisted on waiting till her husband said "Dear child, do take something." Only after the most urgent entreaties of Fräulein Perini, did she at last consent to eat something. She wanted to embroider, and took up her work; but the next moment she laid it down again.

Weeping and lamenting, she went through the gardens and greenhouses.

Fräulein Perini had the greatest difficulty in soothing her.

Then Frau Ceres reprimanded the gardener for raking over the paths. The marks of her husband's feet were in the gravel, and they must not be removed, or he would die.

At other times, she would sit at the window for hours together, looking out upon the hills and the clouds, and the river where the boats were sailing up and down; and all the while she would be grieving in a low voice to herself,—

"Henry, I grieved you sorely, I wounded you: you may whip me as you would your slaves; only let me be with you, forgive me. Do you remember that day when you came out to me, and Cæsar played the harp, and I danced in my blue frock and my gold-colored shoes? Do you remember?—"Manna," she suddenly cried; "Manna, bring your harp and play for me. I want to dance; I am still pretty. Come, Henry!"

Suddenly she turned to Fräulein Perini, and asked, "He is coming back, is he not?" Her tone was so quiet and natural as for the moment to re-assure them.

"Tell him he shall marry Frau Bella when I die," she suddenly began again, her great eyes gazing vacantly before her. "Frau Bella is a handsome widow, very handsome; and he shall give her my ornaments, they will look so well on her."

"Pray, do not speak so."

"Come, we must see that his heaths are well taken care of. He taught me all about them. We will have some good bog-earth dried and pounded and sifted. Then, when he comes home, he will say, 'That was very clever of you, Ceres: you did that well."

She went with Fräulein Perini to the hot-house, and gave intelligent directions to the head gardener that he should be careful to keep the heaths very moist, and not in too high a temperature.

Fräulein Perini sent one of the boys who was working in the garden to fetch Eric. Her anxiety was so great, she could not bear to be left longer alone with Frau Ceres.

Frau Ceres appeared very composed. After examining all the heaths, and lifting each one up to see that the saucers were kept properly damp, she left the hot-house, saying as she went,—

"It is quite time that Captain Dournay should learn the care of plants. These scholars fancy there is nothing they can learn from us: I can assure them they can learn a great deal from my husband. There are more than two hundred heaths at the Cape. Yes, you may take my word for it; he told me so. Now let us go back into the house."

On their way, they came to an open space, where was a pond, and a little fountain playing.

Suddenly Frau Ceres uttered a piercing cry. Down the broad path towards them came the black man Adams, with Roland on one arm, and Manna on the other.

"You are changed into a negro! Who did that to you? Henry! Fie, Henry! Take off the black skin!" With piercing cries, she threw herself upon Adams, and tore the clothes from his body; then sank lifeless on the ground before him. They were just bearing her into the house, when Doctor Richard and the Professorin arrived.

Frau Ceres never woke.

Her body was laid in the great music room; and the flowers that Sonnenkamp had so tenderly cared for were set about his wife's corpse. Here in the music room, where the young people had so often sung and danced—would there ever be dancing and music here again?

The friends came, and kissed and embraced Roland; Lina also appeared, and embraced Manna in silence. By a pressure of the hand, a silent embrace, each one expressed to the mourners his sympathy, his desire to help them.

Pranken appeared also among the mourners, and, with Fräulein Perini, knelt beside the body.

After a blessing had been pronounced in the church, the funeral-train moved towards the burial-ground.

The members of the music-club had been gathered together by Knopf and Fassbender, and sang at the open grave. Roland stood leaning on Eric, while the Mother and aunt Claudine supported Manna.

Erics thoughts reverted to that day in

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spring when he had sat over his wine with Pranken, and had looked out at the church-yard where the nightingale was singing. Who could have foretold then that he would be standing here a mourner at the grave of the mother of his betrothed, and of his pupil?

The music ceased, and the Priest advanced to the edge of the grave. There was a hush for a while over the whole assembly. The chattering of the magpies, and the screaming of the nut-peckers, was heard in the trees.

After repeating a prayer in a low tone, the Priest raised his voice, and cried, —

"Thou poor rich child from the New World! Now thou art in the new world indeed. Thou hast gone hence with thy sins unforgiven, in delusion, in frenzy. Thou hast left thy children behind to atone, to suffer, to sacrifice, for thee. They will do it: they must do it. Children, God is your father; the church is your mother. Hearken unto me. Here we stand beside an open grave. Ye can live without us, without the church; but, when ye come to die, ye must call upon us: and, though ye have scorned us, we shall come full of grace and compassion; for God so commandeth us. O thou departed one! now thou art ennobled; for death gives nobility: thou art decked with ornaments fairer than thy diamonds; for, with all thy worldliness, thou didst have a believing spirit. Grief set her crown of thorns upon thee: thou hast suffered much, and thou wilt be forgiven. But I call upon ye who stand here this day alive: Ye can build country houses, and furnish them sumptuously; but the prince of all life, which is death, shall come and mow you down, and ye shall moulder in the ground. A house of boards, that is the country house which is decreed to every one, deep in the bosom of the earth. But woe to those men whose holy ark is the fire-proof safe! The men of so-called philosophy and natural science come and flatter the believers in the fire-proof safe, and when the bolt from heaven falls, they say, 'There is a lightening-rod on our house, we have nothing to fear.' And if death comes, what say ye then? Ye have no answer. O ye poor, rich children! Turn unto us! The arms of mercy are open to receive you; they alone can defend you. To that rich young man the answer was: — I speak not of how the wealth was won from which the young soul will not part; I only call — no, it is not I who call — my passing breath but bears the eternal word. Leave all that thou hast and follow me. Wilt thou too, go hence weeping, because thou canst not give up the riches of the world? Oh! I call thee — no, He who has brought this day upon us, who looks down from the height of heaven into this grave — He calls to thee: Rend asunder the bonds of slavery! Thou art thyself a slave: be free! And thou, noble maiden, who hast the highest in thyself, look down into this grave, and forward to the time when such a grave shall open for thee. Save thyself! Despise not the hand that will save thee. Days of sorrow, nights of desolation will come upon thee. In the day thou wilt ask, 'Where am I?' and for what is my life on the earth? And thou wilt send forth thy voice weeping into the night, and wilt shudder at the night of death.? Thou knowest what is salvation; thou bearest it in thyself. And now? Faithless — thrice faithless! Faithless to thyself, to thy friends, to thy God!"

Beating himself upon the breast, he cried in a voice broken by tears, —

"How willingly, how joyfully would I die, I who am speaking to ye now, if I could say, I have saved them. And yet, not I, but the Spirit through the breath of my mouth. Come, leave all that holds ye back, all on which ye lean — come to me, ye children of sorrow; to me, ye children of misery, of pain, of riches, and of helpless poverty!"

There was a pause in which no one stirred, and the Priest resumed, —

"I have spoken, I have warned, I have called as I was forced to, and because I was forced. I appeal to thee whose mortal frame we are here consigning to the earth, speak to thy children, 'Children, the three handfuls of earth which you were to throw upon my grave, ye shall throw them when this hand resigns what is called the riches of this world, but which is nothing but the ransom of a lost soul.' If ye do it not, we shall still pray for ye who are dead in the living body, as we do for thee whose dead body we are sinking into the grave, but whose soul is risen into eternity. Grant that thy children may receive eternal life, only the life eternal!" —

The Priest's whole body trembled, and Roland trembled as he stood by Eric. Weidmann approached the boy on the other side, and, laying his hand on his shoulder, said in a low voice, "Be calm."

The grave was filled up with earth: the Priest hurried from the church-yard and Pranken with him: the mourners took their way back to the Villa.

"Who would have believed that the Priest

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would dare to speak so at the grave? But it is well. What more can come? Is not all accomplished now? It is best that she should have died when she did. The poor rich children!"

"What will the children do now?"

Such were the words that might have been heard on all sides, as the people dispersed after the burial of Frau Ceres.

The children returned from their mother's grave to the Villa.

Roland was the first to recover his self-command.

"I will not let myself be broken down," he cried. "The black horror shall not frighten me. Give me something to do, Eric. Herr Weidmann, now for the first time, I am yours: I will work, and not let myself give way."

Manna, too, began to be herself again.

Their mother's death, and the painful scene at her grave, had given added firmness to the character of both.

The day after the funeral, Roland was first applied to upon a question of money: Fräulein Perini asked for her discharge. With the approval of Eric and Weidmann, she was abundantly provided for, besides receiving Frau Ceres' entire wardrobe. She packed the clothes in great trunks, and had them taken to the parsonage; but she herself soon departed for Italy, where she joined the young widow, the daughter of Herr von Endlich.

Villa Eden stood now entirely at the disposal of Eric and Roland.

Once more, the Professorin became the one point of attraction; and all assembled in her cottage. She had now a good helper in Professor Einsiedel, who had obtained leave of absence, and promised to spend the winter at the Villa.

After the shocks that Roland and Manna had experienced, their mourning for their mother was almost a relief. That her death should have been caused as it was by terror at the sight of Adams, by a diseased imagination, and that the Priest at the grave had made his last, desperate attempt upon them, — these things were almost a comfort to them. Roland gratefully clasped his sister's hand as she said, —

"Let us not have any feeling of hatred or bitterness towards the negro for having been the innocent cause of our mother's death."

"If there were only something else in prospect for you, if you could only find such an active interest as I have at Mattenheim," said Roland, in whose mind the idea became uppermost, that he must return to Mattenheim. But with a sad smile, like a sunbeam breaking through heavy clouds, he soon added, —

"I forgot: there is something else for you, and something so beautiful! You will be Eric's wife."

Manna was silent.

"What are you reading so earnestly?" she asked Roland one day, after he had been sitting for hours without looking up from his book. He showed her what it was, a book treating of forests. That subject was the only one which now fascinated him, he told her; and, as she spoke, it seemed almost as if it must be Eric talking, so entirely had the boy entered into the spirit of his teacher.

He felt refreshed by the study of this perpetual and permanent growth, and the voluntary protection of it by men. With a real enthusiasm he added, —

"I could not be interested in raising flowers, as my father was; but I get from him the love with which I can devote myself to the trees and woods.

CHAPTER VI.

THE VOLUNTEER.

In accordance with a wish of Weidmann's, Eric accompanied Roland and Joseph to the city, in order to deposit the valuable papers in a place of safety.

The first house they visited on arriving in the city was the Banker's, which, situated in a garden outside the gates, combined the repose of the country with the animation of the city. The business life of the owner was in the heart of the city: here he was his own master. Everywhere throughout the richly furnished house were marks of refinement and elegance.

To Eric's surprise, he found the Banker in the great library where were several beautiful statues. The man, who, at Wolfsgarten, at the time of Clodwig's death, had kept so modestly in the background, here in his domestic life presided over a rich and solid establishment.

After a short explanation of the object of their visit, the Banker took his guests to his office. Here, in his business activity, he seemed another man, or rather two men. He had, so to speak, an office nature and a home nature: in his own house friendly, amiable, generous, and communicative; at his office chary of words, curt, decided, and cautious.

He declined receiving all these valuable

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papers himself, but advised their being taken to the city bank for deposit: as an additional precaution, the coupons should be separated from the bonds, and kept by themselves.

The Banker advised that Roland should acquire some insight of his own into business and money matters. As he would one day have the management of such a large property, it would be desirable for him to enter some business house for a while; otherwise he would always be in a measure dependent upon others. He offered to make an exception in Roland's favor, and, contrary to his custom, receive the young man into his own office.

Eric assented, seeing what an advantage this would be; but Roland looked embarrassed. The Banker now produced Weidmann's letter in which the same desire was expressed.

Roland cast a timid look about the room, where several young men were standing at desks writing, or were walking to and fro. Should he be standing there too? What did these strangers mean by disposing of him so, and wishing to give him a career?

All this passed rapidly through his mind, and, when he was asked his opinion, he replied, —

"I am grateful not only for the kindness, but for the frankness, of Herr Weidmann and yourself in speaking so openly with me."

The Banker sent word through a speaking-tube, that he desired Herr Rudolph Weidmann to come up to his room.

Weidmann's youngest son, who was a clerk in the banking house, soon entered.

There was a general introduction: the young man bowed to Eric, and shook hands with Roland. The Banker told young Weidmann that he should be excused from work as long as Roland remained; but the young man replied, that there was so much work going on as to make that impossible. The Banker dismissed him with an invitation to come that evening to his house; and, after a few friendly words with Roland, the boy departed.

The Banker considered whether it would not be well to sell some of Sonnenkamp's American paper, owing to the unsettled state of the times; but, on the other hand, he could hardly take upon himself the responsibility. He received with a cordial smile Roland's suggestion, that they were bound to keep his money as it was till there should be some new developments.

Roland and Eric next accompanied the Banker to the house. It was just at the time, when, owing to the election of Lincoln, American paper was falling from day to day in value, occasioning great excitement in business circles. Roland and Eric were greatly impressed by the fact; and the question arose in their minds, How could men take a purely moral and disinterested view of great public events, when the rise and fall which they occasioned affected so immediately their own profit and loss?

Bewildered by the noise and the contradictory emotions that the scene aroused in them, they left the Exchange, and became the Banker's guests in his own house.

Here the Banker assumed the part of teacher, and explained to his two guests that the laws of economics and those of humanity were hard to reconcile, almost as hard as the conflict between the freedom of the will and the limitations of nature in the department of philosophy. They are parallel lines that rarely meet, and then only to part again at once. After all, what was one man's loss was another man's gain, so that none of the world's property was really lost.

Eric showed how these contrasts had been recognized, though in a different way, in the most ancient times. The rod of Hermes is at once the wand of divination and the symbol of that instantaneous flash — the introduction into life and the dismissal from it — by which the old myths represented human life and death.

The Banker, who was always ready to receive information, listened to Eric's explanation of the myths and sagas, and their similarity in all the different nations. He was always eager to penetrate any new realm of knowledge, and grateful for instruction.

While the company were at table, several telegrams were brought to the Banker, who read them tranquilly, and then handed them to his two sons, who were sitting at table with him.

Here, at this table, Eric was for the first time conscious of a change in himself. The Banker liked to have every finished result of science served up for him, and he brought intelligence and relish to the enjoyment of it, as he did at the same time to a perfectly ripe pine-apple; but Eric was not so communicative as he used to be, and no longer felt called upon to give himself out at every demand. He kept silence, and left the talking to others. As soon as he had finished his comparisons of the different mythologies, the Banker, in his turn, spoke of the

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effect that was produced by the rise or fall of this or that paper; the exchange also he described as an organic existence.

Eric was a ready listener, he wanted now to be instructed by others.

The Banker's daughter-in-law, a lady of noble bearing, treated Eric and Roland with marked cordiality, and expressed a great desire to become acquainted with the Professorin and Manna.

Eric was surprised at being reminded of an incident that had almost passed from his memory. This lady had heard him sing at the festival, and said how much pleasure it would give her to hear him again, as she sang a little herself: upon his saying, however, that he was not at that moment at all in the mood for singing, she at once ceased from her request, in the hope that it might, by and by, at some happier time be granted her.

As the company were rising from table, young Weidmann and the cashier Fassbender were announced. The host made them come in, and sit down with the party at dessert. The young men were evidently embarrassed, and felt it a great favor to be thus admitted into the private life of their chief.

The gentlemen repaired to the billiard room. And the young men, as a special favor, were allowed to smoke a cigar in the house of the chief, even in his presence.

As Roland showed no inclination to take part in the game, the Banker told him to consider himself at perfect liberty to go to his room, or to take a walk with Weidmann and Fassbender. He preferred going with the young men to his room. He returned presently, when the gentlemen, having finished their game, were sitting in familiar chat about the open fire, and with many thanks announced his resolution of entering the office for a while; only stipulating that he should not be charged with fickleness of purpose, if he did not stay long in the employ.

Far into the night, Roland talked with Eric, telling him how strange it seemed to have so much guidance and protection offered him, although he acknowledged the advantage it was to him, and the gratitude he felt towards these gentlemen for it.

The next morning, the box of papers was taken to the vaults of the bank. Eric and Roland stood as in a fairy tale before all this hidden treasure. Some old recollection must have been stirred in Roland; for he suddenly said to Eric, —

"What would Claus say if he could see all this?"

He looked in amazement at Eric, standing there so tranquil and indifferent.

"Does it not impress you strongly too?" he said.

"Not at all; for what is all this treasure? From the top of a mountain, you see things of much more value than this stamped metal. Houses, fields, trees, are much more, much greater."

Roland looked disheartened. For a long time to come, he would have nothing to do but cast accounts, and watch the money market. The full life at the Villa, the mountains, the river, the drives, and Mattenheim, all seemed removed to an immeasurable distance. Nevertheless, he remained firm.

Eric took Roland to the counting-house, where the latter was assigned a place at young Weidmann's desk.

Eric staid several days; for he wished to become acquainted with Roland's associates. He was especially pleased with the cashier, Fassbender's son, a young man of much discernment and youthful freshness, active in body, and vivacious in mind. He was president of the mercantile *turnverein*, and assiduously cultivated the love of learning in himself and his companions.

Eric could resign the guidance of Roland to this young man with entire confidence.

He talked much with the Banker about Clodwig. The Banker was very lenient in his judgment of Bella, and could not refrain from reproaching Clodwig with having married again: he had deceived himself, and allowed Bella to be deceived; for the latter had really believed that she could find pleasure in a quiet life, and relinquish all the privileges of youth; and it was the smothered passion for adventure which had driven her to this extreme.

Eric listened, but said little. He even felt it his duty to tell the Banker that he had got over his old zeal for imparting knowledge, and was no longer in a condition to give the total results of his thoughts and study.

The Banker considered this perfectly natural. The knowledge which constituted a man's calling, he said, was a man's capital, and ought not to be drawn upon: every man held a kind of trust fund, and the interest only should be risked and freely employed in trade.

He thought it eminently proper that Eric should now learn to be economical of himself.

On the third day, Eric returned alone to Villa Eden, promising to forward all necessary aids for Roland.

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He came, as it were, out of another world; but his heart was lightened: he rejoiced at Roland's sudden resolve, and even began to consider himself no longer as a mere scholar, but as one to whom a great treasure has been intrusted which he is to care for next to truth.

The announcement of Roland's decision created great astonishment at Villa Eden.

Eric found Professor Einsiedel and Fräulein Milch at his mother's; and all gazed wonderingly at the latter when she suddenly exclaimed, —

"Roland enter the house of a Jew!" But to the inquiry what there was strange about this, she made no reply, only looking round as if bewildered.

Eric told the Professor he should now make great allowance for the rich, to whom full aspiration could scarcely be possible with their vast possessions ever in their thoughts. The safe-key in the breast pocket must, he thought, lock up something in the heart.

Manna, alone, comprehended the true grounds of Roland's strange resolve; for she said that it would not merely prove the youth's salvation to learn the management of wealth, which, after all, was only a kind of military drill, but that he evidently considered it a fortunate opportunity to be transplanted into an entirely new sphere of life.

And so it was.

Manna almost envied her brother the opportunity of doing and becoming something new. She, too, would gladly have engaged in some occupation. A trait of Sonnenkamp's strange nature asserted itself within her. She wanted to go forth into the world. She was more with the Aunt than with the Professorin, who desired, if possible, to effect a speedy and fundamental cure; while the Aunt preferred to begin by a tender fostering care.

Eric and his mother pondered much upon how best to deal with Manna's restless mood, and to satisfy her longing aspirations.

So much had come upon her at once; and her love for Eric did not seem quite to compensate her for what she had lost, since at heart she still yearned for a firm support in the Church.

Weidmann came, and with him they discussed the question of waiving all ordinary considerations, and celebrating Manna's and Eric's marriage at once.

He declared that one ought never to have recourse to marriage as a remedy, but should enter into a new phase of existence with a tranquil heart, and a new joy in existence itself.

This coincided with Eric's own secret feeling, and he said to Manna, —

"Your desire to travel, to find something outside yourself, is a perfectly natural one. You miss that great other home of yours, the church, which you could visit at any time, and come back in an altered frame of mind. You want some other human being to proffer you out of his own thought and soul, and upon constituted authority, something distinct from yourself, — something which you yourself have lost. Instead of this, you have now to find your all at home and in yourself. It is hard, I know; but so it must be. So long as you seek any thing without, you are not at home with yourself. Here in this place, in these rooms where such horror overwhelmed us, we must learn to compose and control ourselves. 'Stand to your post!' is the military command; and it has also a moral significance."

With such words, and more to the same effect, did Eric lighten Manna's perplexities: she embraced and thanked him for thus entering into her very soul, and freeing her from every yoke.

Quietly and serenely the days glided by, until an invitation arrived from the Justice's wife. The Professorin accepted at once; but Manna said she could not accompany her: she was not yet chastened and calm enough to mingle with the world and submit to being received with compassion.

Eric made a sign to his mother not to urge Manna; and she was left to do as she liked.

CHAPTER VII.

BITTER ALMONDS BECOME SWEET.

The Justice's wife was an object of envy in that the first coffee-party of the winter was to be at her house. It seemed hardly necessary to provide any entertainment; for who would care to eat and drink when there was so much to talk about? — of Sonnenkamp, of Bella, of the betrothal of Eric and Manna, of poor Frau Ceres, of the negro, of the Prince, of Clodwig's death. There was so much, that only a part of it could be brought into play.

At length the company assembled.

The corner of the sofa where Bella used to sit — it seemed decades ago — was shunned with a kind of superstitious dread. Frau "Lay-Figure" was so extremely for-

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tunate as to have a story to tell about a sofa-corner. There was a physician back in the country, with a very small practice, and the sofa in his parlor had a great hole in it: so, whenever a caller came, the doctor's wife was very affable, and seated herself forthwith upon the torn place in the sofa. It was a good story enough, and Frau Lay-Figure told it well, too: and she laughed, as she generally did; for she laughed at every thing: but nobody else laughed very heartily.

Luckily, a stranger was now introduced; quite a distinguished personage, who now made her first appearance at the grand coffee-party. This was the wife of the Director of the Water-works, who, in the discharge of his duties as Rhine Commissioner, had come to reside for a short time in the little town.

The Frau Directorin of the Water-works seated herself, all unconsciously, in Bella's old place.

And now they could begin.

But who would have guessed that the covetousness of the Cabinetsräthen would be first discussed as a kind of appetizing morsel! This was the way with great people. Of course, one could get clothes from Paris by such machinations. A magnificent system of bribery indeed! Who knew what else she might have got out of Sonnenkamp, and others besides? The ladies were almost ashamed of their own virtuous stupidity.

The English lady spoke with great respect of the Americans who had purchased the villa of the Cabinetsrath.

The Consul's wife in particular, she said, belonged to one of the first families in the Northern States; for there was a decided aristocracy there, distinguished for its noble bearing. The great merchants, the millionnaires of the North, were usually called "merchant-princes."

Frau White, or Frau "Coal," as she was called, gazed reverently up at the English lady. Her glance said that she considered the latter a happy woman to have any thing so well worth telling.

The Rhine Commissioner's wife had a very good time. To her they could tell the whole story of the house of Sonnenkamp; and the ladies took turns, and supplemented one another's narratives.

The wife of the cement-manufacturer wore her perpetual frown, and nodded occasionally, as if she had much to say, when, in reality, she had nothing.

Frau Lay-Figure observed, smiling sweetly, that it was very interesting to have known a slave-trader. She had often wished to see one.

"And a cannibal too!" said the wife of the steamboat-agent, who, as usual, held her cup aloft in her left hand, and dipped her cake in it from time to time. She had always the very best appetite.

"Yes, that is interesting too," assented Frau Lay-Figure, smiling so as to show her teeth.

It was remarkable that no one ventured at first to allude to Frau Bella, until the wife of the steamboat-agent told how she had gone with her eldest daughter to the dentist, and he had told her he was never so startled in his life as when the Countess von Wolfsgarten came to him, the very night Count Clodwig was so ill, to have a front tooth set.

The Doctor's wife said that Frau Bella was not guiltless of her husband's death.

All now fell upon her. She must tell them what she knew; and, before she could explain herself, Frau Lay-Figure added, —

"And no doubt Herr Sonnenkamp was guilty too! Who knows what he did?"

The good Doctor's lady turned pale; but though she protested earnestly and solemnly, that her husband had said nothing about it, that she never would have spoken if he had, they would not believe her. The Doctor's wife was exceedingly sorry, and retracted her remarks, that Bella, in a passionate outburst, had wounded deeply her husband's feelings. The mistaken declaration of the coroner, so strenuously contradicted, was revived; and they said it was evident that Frau Bella had felt herself in some way to blame, and had fled on this account.

"I pity Herr von Pranken," said Lina suddenly.

All eyes were turned upon her; and Lina quietly continued, —

"Yes, he is not so bad a man after all. He has lost his bride, and now his sister has deserted him; and for so much shame and misery to be heaped upon his head is too hard."

The wife of the Director of the Water-works praised Lina's kind-heartedness, and wanted to know more about Bella's character. Frau Lay-Figure said she was the one to inform her; for she had a cook who had formerly lived with Bella. The latter was not bad to her servants, only capricious. She sometimes scolded them dreadfully, but made them presents afterwards, and took care to have them enjoy themselves.

A good deal of curiosity was expressed

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by one and another, as to whether Eric and Manna would soon marry. The death of Frau Ceres and the Priest's violent harangue were next discussed.

The steamboat-agent's wife had some further information to give about Bella's nocturnal journey. She had questioned the pilot; and universal astonishment was expressed that Bella had taken no wardrobe with her.

"I fancy she will assume man's attire, and she will look remarkably well in it."

Frau Lay-Figure rolled her eyes about the circle after this audacious remark; but she encountered no glance. The eyes of all the ladies were cast down.

The question was now asked, whether the Professorin had been invited. The Justice's wife replied in the affirmative; and Frau Lay-Figure began, that people said, — but they all knew no one had ever said it but herself, — that the Professorin had managed very adroitly to oust Pranken, and substitute her son. Before any one could reply, there was a knock, and the Professorin entered. All rose; and Frau Lay-Figure, who had ensconced herself in the harmless corner of the sofa, insisted upon giving the Professorin her place.

With winning frankness, the lady remarked, that she had had a strong desire to see something of her fellowmen once more, and could enter most heartily into their simple and delightful mode of life. Amidst so much confusion, one was apt to forget that there could be any thing steadfast in the world.

Every one was struck with respectful surprise, Frau Lay-Figure most of all.

Inquiries were made for Manna; and the Professorin said she had wished to be remembered to them, and regretted that she could not come. A genial feeling prevailed; and Lina did not wait to be entreated, but, at the request of the Professorin, seated herself at the piano, and sang. She felt that her music would refresh the good lady; and she sang with her whole soul. She had never sung better. In the midst of her performance, Manna appeared with Aunt Claudine in the adjoining room. Both waited in silence till the song was ended.

Lina was overjoyed at Manna's arrival, and accosted her thus, —

"Forgive me for being so naughty! It has vexed me that my happy betrothal-time should be spoiled by all this trouble; and now it is just the same with you! I was thinking even now, as I sang, how I wished I could give you some of my joy and forgetfulness and hopefulness and all the rest."

The eyes of all were fixed upon Manna, whose appearance was totally changed by her mourning dress. The Rhine Commissioner's wife observed in a low tone, that she had never seen such dark eyes, or so broad and fair a forehead. Manna was perfectly self-possessed, and bowed when assailed on all sides with entreaties that she would continue to live at the Villa, and not sell it, and remove to another country. They were all so much attached to Eric and herself, and would like so much to have them for friends and neighbors.

In fact, a magnanimous spirit took possession of the company; and, on their way home, Manna exclaimed, —

"O Mother! Eric was perfectly right. He persuaded me to come here, and I am glad I did. We ought not to seclude ourselves from people when they are kindly disposed towards us."

During the whole drive, Manna held the Professorin's hand, and, when they arrived at the Villa, ran up the steps for the first time with a firm and rapid tread. She ordered the room to be brightly lighted, and also begged Eric to sing to her. He knew what songs to choose; and, when they separated, she said, —

"Yes, my dear ones, I have taken my journey, and now I am once more quite at home."

CHAPTER VIII.

TRANSPLANTED.

ROLAND, meanwhile, was living quietly at the commercial town, industrious and happy. He resided in the Banker's house, and made friends with the children of the latter, particularly with a younger son, who, just returning from the University, had laid aside his books, and entered immediately upon the banking business. But for Weidmann's youngest son he cherished a genuine youthful friendship, very unlike that artificial intimacy with the cadet, which had been forced upon him by others. They were incessantly busy during the day, which closed with a late dinner, after which they had a game in the billiard-room, or attended some concert or play, or, more frequently, read or studied quietly, each by himself.

Roland often sat in his room till late at night, teaching English to his young friends Weidmann and Fassbender.

He, too, had now become a teacher, and

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derived a singular pleasure from thus imparting something of himself, and not merely of his possessions,—a pleasure which was exalted into the purest joy by the bright and cordial nature of young Weidmann.

Wherever Roland appeared, he was the object, first of remark, afterwards of kindly attention. He thought often of his winter at the capital, and how different life had been there. Here he found a circle of commoners, understanding itself thoroughly, and not without pride in its own strength. All the officials at the counting-house were particularly friendly to Roland. His beauty, his confiding disposition, above all his hard fate, seemed to recommend him to their especial consideration. The Banker praised him for having mastered, in so short a time, the essentials of the business; for he could now compute the price of any public funds by means of the exchange lists, and had a good insight into book-keeping.

So passed several weeks, until the elder Weidmann arrived, and invited his son, the cashier Fassbender, and Roland to visit him.

Weidmann first saw his son and Fassbender alone, and learned from them that the younger tradesmen had discussed the subject of the slave-trade, and had even held a meeting, and formally debated the question, but disagreed in their final vote. They stood twelve against twelve; it having been strongly urged that a man might lawfully carry on this traffic, provided he were not personally engaged in it; especially since others would be sure to carry on the lucrative business if he were held back by scruples.

Weidmann looked grave.

Roland came. He was very animated, and re-assured by Weidmann's encouraging glance, he begged to be allowed to return to Mattenheim.

The Banker assented readily.

With expressions of genuine affection, they bade Roland good-by. First of all, he revisited Villa Eden with Herr Weidmann. He had left it a boy; he returned a mature man.

In a few days, Roland's effects were all packed, ready for a removal to Mattenheim.

Eric accompanied him thither, and Roland turned crimson, when, on entering his room—it was the same that Lilian had formerly occupied—Knopf handed him a note from the latter. She had expressly requested that it might not be given to Roland until he returned permanently to Mattenheim.

The next day, Eric went back to Villa Eden, and announced to Manna and his mother his own intention of removing to Mattenheim.

A strange conflict ensued in Manna's breast; but, as she made no allusion to it, Eric thought it right to respect her reserve.

The Major, to whom Eric confided his plan, complained that he, too, had got to build himself a new nest in his old age; for his brother, the Grand-master, whose wife had died, had become engaged, and was to be married again in the spring. Now, Fräulein Milch had no mind to be tolerated and patronized by a young wife; and when his Masonic brother, the Grand-master, had informed them that he should wish to reserve one of the rooms which the Major had formerly occupied, for a guest-chamber, Fräulein Milch had behaved in a most independent manner.

She thanked him, but declared her fixed determination to leave the house.

They had never had a quarrel before.

But when the Major perceived how sorrowfully Fräulein Milch repented her obstinate determination, he scolded himself for being too meek and yielding, and thanked the Fräulein for preserving her dignity as he ought to have done himself, but which he was so apt to lose sight of.

He proposed to Fräulein Milch the plan of removing to the castle, where there were fine rooms all in readiness, and where it must be very pleasant to live; but Fräulein Milch would hear nothing about living in a knightly castle. She set forth to the Major the bother it would entail: with the butcher, the baker, the grocer, the milkmaid, with all the various trades and callings, did she persecute the Major, until he was sore dismayed.

"We will say no more about it," he cried, "but pray don't let me forget to ask Captain Dournay how the old knights used to live."

Upon Eric's arrival, this had been the Major's opening question, and then, for the first time, he made known his own difficulty.

Eric did not regret it; for he hoped, that, in the spring, the Major would remove to the green cottage, while his mother would live with Manna at the Villa.

The Major laughed. "Did you ever hear," said he, "the story of the man who was a suitor forty years? Courting-time is very fine, I tell you; but even ten years

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is too long. And now away with you! There is something for you to learn yet. But don't tell a soul about that stale old suitor, will you? On your honor? He, too, was once young."

On the eve of his departure, when he and Manna were alone, Eric said, —

"Manna, we have no betrothal time. Our hearts are torn by sorrow and separation, we must comfort one another."

"And might I know why you, too, forsake me?"

"I shall be much with you and my mother; but I must be alone also. Just think, I have to become a new man, to change my scholarly vocation for some other, I know not what; but whether I am near you, or not, whether I hold your hand, and look into your eyes, or am far away, be sure that you are the inmost life of my heart: I bear you about with me like a blessed faith."

As Eric continued in this strain, a new and delightful understanding was established between the two, and Manna embraced him, saying, —

"I will not shed a tear to-morrow when you leave; and I will follow you in all your wanderings with trustful eyes. I know that I am with you and in you, as you are with me and in me. It seems inconceivable to me that I never knew you before that spring day. I cannot think what the world was like before I knew you; for I cannot imagine the world without you."

When Eric left for Mattenheim, the next day, he kissed his betrothed for the first time before his mother; and, after he had mounted his horse, Manna said to him, —

"I am glad you are going; and I will stay quietly with your mother, and be perfectly content. Thank you for letting me be a child once more before I become your wife. Ah! I had no childhood; but forgive me. I will never cease to be grateful for what has come to me, and I will not mingle sorrow with it all. And I promise that you shall have in me a strong and trustworthy wife."

So Eric departed.

Adams went with him. He, too, was to learn husbandry at Mattenheim.

The ladies were now alone with Professor Einsiedel and the Major, who was more at the Villa than ever.

The Villa itself, however, was silent and deserted; for they all lived at the green cottage. Many of the servants were dismissed, and the gardeners only were kept at the Villa.

CHAPTER IX.

UPON NEW SOIL.

A CHEERFUL life they led at Mattenheim. The day began and ended early. There was no trespassing upon the night. All were incessantly occupied, and even Adams could not hold aloof.

Weidmann had arranged matters very methodically.

Adams received no orders; but they allowed him to see that every one about him was busy, and, in the end, he could not choose but follow their example. He became ashamed of his idleness; and the servant who had once been a criminal must now teach him to plough and sow. He was even eager to thresh; but this was exceedingly difficult for him, because he could not keep time. He liked best to work in the mill; and it was a droll sight to see the stalwart negro pass and repass, powdered with meal. He also applied himself zealously to his books, in the evening, with Knopf for a teacher.

Of all the dwellers at Mattenheim, Knopf was the happiest. What more could he desire? He had Weidmann whom he revered, Eric whom he held in high esteem, Roland whom he loved enthusiastically, and a prince and a slave to instruct; for Prince Valerian had to submit to being taught at Adams's side; and, while Adams toiled at his writing-book, the Prince pursued his studies in history and mathematics; and it was often amusing to hear Knopf say, when giving a lesson in the history of literature, "Observe, my dear young lady," for hitherto his pupils in this department had been mostly girls.

During the day-time, they were employed, whatever the weather, in the open air. Surveys were undertaken, especially of the recently purchased domain; and many a good hunt came off, in which Roland distinguished himself by his great expertness.

Roland was passed, so to speak, from hand to hand; for each of Weidmann's sons took possession of him for hours or days at a time, and found a peculiar pleasure in affording the youth all possible assistance. Roland gained an insight into many different processes of manufacture; but his curiosity was also awakened in quite another direction.

In the cement-manufactory all was so still, that Roland asked the Inspector, Fassbend-

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er's eldest son, whether the workmen were not allowed to speak.

"They prefer not to," was the answer; "for talking distracts their attention, and, as they work by the job, it would hinder them very much."

Roland looked confounded. These men imposed silence upon themselves for the sake of earning their bread!

The noon-bell rang. He saw young men and girls of his own age come out of the manufactory: some of the girls were knitting as they walked; and the question arose within him, In what respect do you and your sister differ from these, and why?

On Saturday evening, Roland stood by while the workmen were paid off. They were gathered in groups before the house. Some had washed themselves, and others were still covered with dust. The little sliding window in the counting-room was opened, and Roland stood near the Inspector, as the latter opened a drawer in which lay various packages of money, and read aloud the list of the workmen's names. He watched their hard hands as they took up the money from the shelf, or swept it with the right hand into the left.

When they were all paid off, he went out and mingled with the people. There were soldierly fellows among them: some were young, and some old; and all carried sticks with sharp ferrules, and were chaffering with a baker-woman for loaves of bread, which they wrapped in cloths, and carried away under their arms. One called to another to bear him company in his walk; and they dispersed up and down the mountain.

Is it really the lot of human beings to live so? How old are these men? Where are their homes?

Roland gazed thoughtfully after them.

Is there any help for such things? or is there none?

"What are you thinking about?" asked the Inspector.

"I am wondering why these tired men should have so far to go."

"It is good for them. It is what keeps them well. The worst feature of their lot is being pent up in a confined space."

Roland was silent; but countless questionings arose within him. He could not cope with them; and no one else, however well disposed, could solve them for him. He did not regain perfect composure except after an interview with Weidmann.

Weidmann possessed a firm and, unvarying equipoise of character, before which the stormy agitation of other souls subsided. He had dignity without severity He was not so vivacious and stimulating as Eric; but he preserved a steady and quiet moderation in all things. He took note of a blunder, a disaster, whether in public or private affairs, with manly calmness; never allowing himself to be bewildered or disheartened thereby.

Eric had caused his pupil to see things through a polished and many-sided prism, which seemed to remove objects from their true position, and make them appear higher or lower than they really were. Weidmann, on the other hand, revealed them in their simple, natural aspect. He introduced method into Roland's thought, life, and work; for, thus far, the latter had been too unstable, even in spiritual things. He gave Roland a course of lessons in agricultural chemistry, which, at the same time, served Prince Valerian as a review of the teaching he had already received.

Eric, too, came in for a share of this instruction, and became Roland's fellow-pupil.

Very seldom did Weidmann pass from positive facts to spiritual interpretations; but he was all the more impressive when he did. He led Roland to a comprehension of human life, to patience, and wisdom. He showed him, that, despite the stress laid on the equality of mankind, men differed as widely in their power of grasping thoughts, as different substances in their ability to conduct heat. Earth warms quicker than water; but it cools more rapidly also. Thus, by analogies from Nature, did Weidmann endeavor to teach his pupil justice and humanity, and was not unfrequently surprised to discover in Roland a kind of previous preparation, which enabled him to receive new ideas readily, and to develop them; for ideas having an analogy to each other must needs suggest and flow into one another, giving rise to new combinations of thought, as we see in mechanics, and conspicuously in chemistry.

Weidmann often expressed briefly to Eric his pleasure at Roland's zeal in work and study, and his interest in the labor of others in the manufactories.

But, if a great and noticeable change was taking place in Roland, a still greater transformation was being effected in Eric. Here, where a man wrought always with reference to his neighbor, where no one dreamed of grasping the entire system, but each throve quietly by himself; here Eric's lips were often sealed for days together. He no longer felt it his duty to be always imparting. He not only found a deep joy in his love for Manna, but he preferred

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listening to talking, and seeing to showing. He felt as if he were on some peaceful island, where yet he could hear a friendly voice at any hour. Pranken might now have watched him from morning till night in vain: he would have had to retract that bitter speech of his about Eric's zeal for imparting knowledge.

Roland and Knopf often regarded him with surprise. He would accompany them on long walks without uttering a single word.

The evening of each day was devoted to festivity. Great stress was here laid upon that *evening recreation*, which, unfortunately, has become obsolete in the world. Frau Weidmann, who dressed neatly but plainly during the day, appeared regularly each evening in holiday attire. They did not have prayers at Mattenheim; but Weidmann held private worship in his soul.

When Roland expressed his peculiar pleasure in the fine and efficient system of horse-breeding at Mattenheim, Weidmann would say, —

"I have a story to tell about that. Everybody has heard, and possibly seen with his own eyes, how the old lord of the manor used to drive through the village with his span of dock-tailed bays, to the admiration of all beholders. And it is customary to say that we have no such horses now-a-days, so large, so fat, so handsome! Well, that may be. But no more are there such miserable nags to be seen as in old times. All horses are moderately strong and handsome, and of tolerably good blood. The breed generally has improved. And there you have the present age. The horse is a fine emblem to my mind; the lilac is another. They used to bring this flowering shrub from Persia, and set it only in the parks of great people; but now it grows everywhere, and is none the less beautiful for being common. And so the beautiful enlarges its circumference perpetually."

Roland's eyes sought Eric's at such words; and their flash said, "How new, how glorious, how wide, the world is!"

On another evening, Weidmann made the casual remark, —

"If the last century deserves to be called the age of enlightenment, ours should be called the age of free labor; for self-imposed labor is alone genuine and productive."

Roland did not look at Eric after this, but sat with downcast eyes. He knew what the expression signified, having heard it used before now in contradistinction to slave-labor.

Prince Valerian, too, created much amusement. He had always retained that insatiable desire for knowledge, which he had displayed on his first day at Wolfsgarten; but Weidmann was as indefatigable in his answers as the Prince in his questions.

Teaching had acquired a new impressiveness for Roland. He was a member of society. He heard questions answered which he himself had not proposed, and, when he subsequently asked these same questions of himself, the replies sank into his heart more deeply than the answers to his own inquiries used to do. Weidmann's teachings were always clear and definite. They fixed attention on the subject exclusively, never on the teacher, insomuch, that Weidmann's own worth was often quite overlooked.

A stream so clear that its bed is plainly visible frequently appears shallower than it really is; and so it was with Weidmann. He was not brilliant; but he had genuine common sense.

There was always unusual excitement at Mattenheim when a letter arrived from Dr. Fritz; and Weidmann said openly, that, since storms were abroad in the world, he trusted that the tempest which had broken over America might clear the air in Europe.

Encouraged by this remark, Knopf related how it had been represented to Louis XIII. that he could never convert savage nations, and bring them into the church, without first enslaving them: now, however, he said, the heathen were brought into the church, but the little matter of freeing them afterwards was forgotten.

Frau Weidmann deprecated this sort of discussion before Roland, but comforted herself with the thought that her husband must have some deliberate purpose in it all.

And, in fact, it was Weidmann's design to lead Roland to a full consideration of this question. He knew the sophistry of the world, and how accessible to such sophistry is a heavy heart. He had often in the commercial town heard intelligent and philanthropic people discuss the question of the slave-trade, and offer all manner of palliations for it. Roland must feel to the full the anguish of having to work out the solution of this problem as best he could. With a vehemence altogether unusual, Weidmann expressed his indignation that any one should ever justify the trading in human beings endowed with speech and reason, as if they were inanimate things.

It was, however, impossible to brood long over any one thought amid the far-reaching and many-sided activity of the place. More-

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over, the laying-out of a new village upon the lately-purchased domain afforded manifold occupation.

Weidmann particularly enjoyed the carrying out of this plan. He admonished the younger men that it was a misfortune not to have arable land connected with a vineyard, not only because crops sometimes fail, but because the smaller vine-dresser, who must sell in the autumn, is underpaid for his petty crop. A peasant who has wheat or potatoes to sell receives the same fixed price for a given amount of produce as others do whose crops are large; but it was not so with grape-culture.

Knopf was very urgent that the village should not be one of those tiresome colonial settlements built exactly in a straight line: and the architect consoled him by pointing out that the meandering brook, and the church upon the hill hard by, gave an effect of grouping by no means geometrical.

Knopf won Roland over to his plan of building a music-hall forthwith.

So there was perpetual interest and variety about the life at Mattenheim.

When they came home from the fields, the manufactories, the mines, or the domain, they could see it at once in Frau Weidmann's face, if she had had a letter from America.

Doctor Fritz wrote often; but their greatest pleasure was when Lilian wrote also.

Roland's interest in Lilian was stimulated and enhanced in two ways. Prince Valerian liked particularly to congratulate Roland on cherishing an early love without losing his manly energies. Knopf had a poet's deep delight in being the secret confidant of so romantic a love.

CHAPTER X.

THE LOST ORGAN-TONES.

MATTENHEIM was the seat of a hearty Rhenish hospitality. There were almost always visitors in the house. The Banker came, and was rejoiced to find Roland so busy and cheerful. Professor Crutius came, and made friendly overtures to Roland; but the latter said, —

"You cannot want my friendship."

The information brought by Crutius concerning the state of affairs in the New World gave rise to many an animated discussion on the great, decisive, protracted struggle between freedom and slavery apparently impending there. Crutius could corroborate from his own observation the statement, that the Southern States were abundantly provided with disciplined officers; for in the military school at West Point, where he had formerly been a teacher, there were many more Southern than Northern students. If the Union succumbed, if, as was very possible, the slaveholders should conquer, the cause of freedom was wounded to the core. Not only would men lose their faith, but the cause itself would be injured; who knew how deeply or for how long a time?

Soon after Professor Crutius departure, a kind of dulness and dejection was observable in Roland. He did what was required of him; but he wore, for hours together, a fixed and hard expression. Neither to Weidmann nor to Eric did he reveal what was passing in his mind. To Knopf alone he confessed his anxieties, making the latter promise that he would tell no one else.

Roland had learned that Dr. Fritz was his father's bitterest foe; he had also accidentally heard Crutius tell Weidmann, that he had no doubt Sonnenkamp was one of the most zealous of the Southern leaders, and would take an active part in the war.

Like a smothered fire which suddenly sends up countless tongues of flame, so did all Roland's anguish revive. Anguish for his father's deeds, for his flight and the elopement of Bella while his mother yet lived, for his mother's death and his own inheritance of sorrow — all these several pains were blended confusedly within him, and his one hope of deliverance seemed annihilated. Lilian is the child of one of his father's most determined enemies, and, if forced to decide, can he take the field against his father?

Roland became desperate. Is there any thing like a righteous moral order in the affairs of this world? No: all is chaos and barbarism.

Knopf knew not how to comfort him, and found it hard to keep his own promise of secrecy.

One day, a bright, cold, bracing winter day, Weidmann crossed the river to close a contract for the supply of railway sleepers, and took Roland with him.

On their return, they found the Rhine full of floating ice. The bells were ringing in the valley and on the hills; the sunset-glow in the heavens spread in strange waves of light over a background of pale green sky. Griffin stood in the prow of the boat, looking out upon the landscape; and as they made their way, the boatmen pushing aside the blocks of ice, Roland said suddenly, —

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"It was just such a day, just such an evening, when Washington crossed the Delaware."

He said no more. Weidmann divined that Roland was wondering why Washington had not abolished slavery immediately on the close of the war; but he turned the subject aside, saying that he thought it one of the finest traits in the great Washington's character, that he was so ready to be convinced of an error.

Roland was startled. What might that mean?

Weidmann continued, "I have left you to yourself, Roland; but now I will tell you the state of your mind. You are involved in doubt and despair; but you are no strong man unless you rise above them."

The young man's eyes dilated, and Weidmann continued, —

"Two things are to be noted. In the first place, you have ceased to believe that the world is under the dominion of moral law, you have lost your faith in that Supreme Being whom we, as well as the Priests, call God; and, secondly, you believe (and this is worse still), — you believe that you must take upon yourself the expiation of sins which you never committed. You dread the inevitable consequences entailed by every earthly event, and are confused by your fears."

Roland gazed wonderingly at the man who thus calmly and deliberately spoke out his own inmost thought.

Weidmann continued, —

"On the one hand, you deny the operation of eternal laws; on the other, you fear it. Now look at these masses of ice in the river. Do you care to learn something of that immeasurable and all-pervading wisdom which interrupts the laws of Nature when their strict, logical consequences would involve the destruction of the world?"

"Oh, if that were so! If I might but learn it!"

"Well, then, stop there. Do you know what changes regularly take place in bodies as they become warmer or colder?"

"Heat expands, and renders them lighter. Cold contracts, and makes them heavier."

"Is it the same with water?"

"I think so."

"No, it is not. If ice were heavier than water, it would sink, and the streams would freeze from the bottom upward. There suddenly we have a deviation, an exception to the so-called stern and implacable law of Nature. Water attains its utmost weight and density at a temperature of 38°.75 Fahrenheit. Beyond this point, it grows lighter, and expands. And I tell you I do not comprehend how a man knowing this can persist in denying God. For God is here. Here is no mere blind, self-regulative, natural law. Here is the free Genius of the Universal. Here is Wisdom. Observe, if solidified water went on increasing in weight, and streams froze from beneath upward, the river-beds would remain undisturbed until the spring-thaws. And do you understand what the consequences would be?"

"Certainly; the fish would all die."

"Even so. Here is the wisdom of God. Here is the Deity who modifies the law of Nature for the preservation of his creatures. Our God no longer towers aloft above the waters and their laws. He lives and works within the waters. The law of Nature is broken that Nature may be preserved. There are no more visible miracles; but all life, beyond a certain point, subsists by a miracle, — the miracle of Genius. The very surface of the earth, whereon we plant and build, is such a natural miracle. Our globe is molten fire inside, and the crust remains cool above it. Do you understand?"

"I believe I do."

"And now, my son, you have not to suffer and repent and make atonement under some iron law of Nature, because the man who was your father sinned. You are free. Least of all creatures, is man the helpless subject of natural law. He is lord of his fate. Look up! The world is very bright, and this whole, vast, beauteous world is full of God. Let the bell-ringers, yonder, understand and address him after their own fashion. It is not ours. The churches are but little chambers in the great temple of the universe. Let no man, in my presence, restrict the Highest to one revelation and one mode of worship. God, the great, the holy, is everywhere. It is impossible not to find him. We have him here, out under the broad arch of heaven, and we have him in our own hearts. He who thus feels the breath of the Infinite upon him — he lives a holy life. Come to my heart, my son! You have wrestled manfully! You are saved!"

Roland threw himself into the arms of this man, and kissed his garment, and wept in the fulness of his heart.

It was night when they disembarked; but within and around Roland all was ineffably bright. A new man stepped upon the shore.

Roland and Weidmann walked home in silence.

With a feeling of release, as if the evil

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spirit which possessed him had been exorcised by a spell, Roland entered the house with Weidmann. He stood at the window, gazing long into the starlit heaven, and then wrote a letter to Manna. Out of an overflowing heart, he told her that to-day he had found the Highest — a trust, a faith, a rest, such as he had never believed possible. But he could not finish the letter.

He sought Eric, and begged that he would go back with him to Villa Eden.

Eric understood him; and the next day they departed together.

It was a happy coming home, when Eric and Roland arrived at the Villa.

They found the ladies tranquil and happy. Manna beamed with a twofold rapture. Her brother and her lover had come; and both brought strength with them and substantial invigoration.

They had much to tell one another; yet, when the first greetings were over, they reverted to higher and more general themes. All were struck with surprise, that Manna should have a story so like Roland's to tell.

Professor Einsiedel had several exceptions to take to Roland's communication; but he stifled them. The youth might some time advance another step; still it was needful for him to have taken this.

To the story of Manna's experience he listened with satisfaction. He could reflect that he had helped to establish her self-dependence.

Sitting with her hand in Eric's, Manna told her tale.

"It was hard for me to forego the old sacred consolations. Whenever I went to church, I thought of you and of myself. The strong, tremulous swell of the organ speaks so directly to the heart. Those tones are lost to you and me. You have told me that your friends used to deride you as a sentimentalist, because you could not overcome the longing in your soul for those organ-tones; and now that same desire awoke within me when I thought of you. But 'tis vain! It must be enough for us that the realm of music and of feeling is still vast and wide, without the strains of the church-organ. I cling to those noble words, 'My temple are ye.' If the human soul has become the temple of the Holy Ghost, we need no visible temple."

A spirit of consecration hovered over them as they were now assembled in the vine-clad house. They felt that they were members of the communion which has no name.

When Eric visited the little town, he was informed by the cooper, now, mine host of the "Carp," that the comedy-writer had wanted to make a carnival play out of Sonnenkamp's story, and bring it out in the market-place; but that he himself had not favored it, and they were going to represent a nobility-mill instead. Commoners in front were to be thrust in above, and noblemen with weapons and shields were to come out below, on the back side.

He begged Eric to be present at the carnival performance next day; but Eric was not in the mood.

CHAPTER XI.

A FULL HOUSE AND FULL DAYS.

On the following day came the Major, and Fräulein Milch, and Lina with her betrothed.

It was settled, that, if the snow remained, they were all to have a sleigh-ride to Mattenheim; for they wished to say good-by to Prince Valerian, who was soon to return home.

It was a day of domestic happiness and cheer.

Manna said repeatedly, that she had often wondered why they should have imposed this separation upon themselves; but she now understood that it was better so.

Fortune smiled upon them. They went to Mattenheim in several large sleighs; and, on their arrival, Knopf took his young friend, Roland, aside, and gave him a private letter from Lilian.

"No one else knew why Roland was so extravagantly gay; but Knopf smiled quietly to himself.

Manna and the Professorin were cordially received by Frau Weidmann and her daughters-in-law. It refreshed the heart to see how full and rich at every stage of existence was the home-life at Mattenheim.

While Lina expressed her especial satisfaction in the fact, that here at Mattenheim one had five good meals a day, and insisted upon it that love sharpened the appetite, the ladies from Villa Eden thoroughly enjoyed a glimpse into Frau Weidmann's housekeeping arrangements.

The Professorin had known her in her early years, and remembered what a fine appearance had been made by this tall lady, who now always wore a huge pair of spectacles. She, Manna, and Aunt Claudine, were moved to reflection and self-examination, as they beheld the woman's active life. All her household were busily employed, and yet it was perfectly quiet and orderly; and Frau Weidmann dis-

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charged her round of duties without tormenting herself by needless anxiety. She was proud to show the ladies her whole house, and particularly her great preserve-jars, containing provision not only for the various branches of her own family, but for the poor who have no forethought. She frankly complained that she had not time enough for self-culture, but said smilingly, that it was like the question of driving the birds away from her garden: she must either forego their singing, or good berries and lettuce, as it was impossible to have both.

Manna learned from Frau Weidmann many particulars of Pranken's life; of his bearing during his short stay at Mattenheim, as well as the facts generally known at the capital.

It had been painful to Manna to be obliged to deal so harshly with Pranken; for he had shown himself kind and good, both to her father and herself: but she was now relieved from this trouble also.

The ladies of Villa Eden were not a little surprised, however, to hear at Mattenheim of the great commotion in the New World; for papers and despatches had come with Lilian's letter from America, and Weidmann could not withhold from them his conviction that the new year would bring the great crisis of the century, perhaps of all modern history. Were it possible to break up the Union, and to elevate slavery, which had been tolerated hitherto as a species of smuggling, into a prominent article of state-policy, the cause of freedom and humanity, for which they were all laboring, would be so fearfully injured and impeded, that the petty efforts of individuals would seem of no account.

Relief from this dark apprehension was experienced by all the company, as Weidmann read aloud a passage from his nephew's letter.

Doctor Fritz wrote, —

"Surpassing all others in the greatness and majesty of his bearing, bright as the brightest example of classic times, we have the noble Seward: and Germans ought especially to honor him, for he has publicly declared, that, wherever the Germans go, it is their task to clear the way for liberty, and that the true Germanic spirit is the spirit of freedom and toleration. This man, who had been named as a Presidential candidate along with Lincoln, and even before, when he saw that Lincoln's chances were better than his own, resolved that there should be no split in the Republican vote, and became a most zealous agitator in Lincoln's behalf."

Weidmann paused, adding the remark that Prince Valerian, who was now leaving for his native land, would there find a similar state of transition.

The last remark was lost upon Manna, who said to Eric in an undertone, —

"Oh, our father! Do you not think that he will take part in this struggle?"

"I do: and that, too, we must bear."

The Prince departed. At the last moment, Lina and Eric had to sing, "We meet again." He deeply regretted that he could not take Knopf with him; but the latter had promised Lilian that he would come to America, and do something there. He did not specify what it was to be.

After the Prince had left, they drew closer together. Roland, Manna, and Eric were sitting in Roland's room when the latter said, —

"Manna, if it comes to war in our native land, I shall go there. I have decided, and no one can deter me."

The words were upon Manna's lips, "And what if our father is fighting on the other side?" but she checked herself, and only said, —

"If you go to the New World, I shall go with you."

"And then Eric will go too. I have talked with Herr Weidmann about it. He has consented; and the thing which he sanctions is, beyond question, right and safe. But I have promised him that I will not go until he says, 'Now is the time.'"

Manna was comforted. She saw that her brother's life was in safe keeping.

On their way home, Aunt Claudine expressed the general feeling, when she said, —

"It seems to me as if these days had been all music and feasting."

"Yes," cried Lina; "one could eat there enough for the whole year."

And they drove on their way laughing.

CHAPTER XII.

FETTERED HANDS UPLIFTED.

The great law of our time, that of the unity of all existence, asserted itself with peculiar and perpetual force in the busy home at Mattenheim. A man of mature years had deliberately concentrated his thoughts upon the movement in the New World; and the destiny of a youth was bound up in the same.

Papers and despatches from America came thicker and faster.

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They lived a twofold life, immersed in pressing and manifold business here, but intent, meanwhile, upon the sharp crisis so rapidly approaching in a remote quarter of the world.

Roland devoured the letters and journals in which the so-called slavery-question was discussed. Doctor Fritz wrote doubtfully of Lincoln. The man's nature was so simple, and his faith in men's goodness so thorough, that he feared he would not be decided enough with the chivalry of the South.

For the first time, Roland heard the slaveholders called *chivalry;* and Weidmann declared that it was no mere form of speech, but a perfectly explicit term. The slave-owners wanted to live merely for the nobler passions, as they were called: other men must toil for their subsistence, and even for their luxuries. This is the true feudal spirit, which looks upon labor as something humiliating and disgraceful, whereas, in reality, man's only true nobleness consists in labor.

Two books exercised a powerful influence upon Roland's mind. He read "Uncle Tom's Cabin" for the first time, and wept over it, but presently roused himself, and asked, —

"How is this? Shall we point the scourged and oppressed to a reward in the next world, where the master will be punished and the slave elevated? But who can compensate him for the torment he has endured here? Is it not as it was with Claus? Who could indemnify him for the captivity he had to undergo before he was pronounced innocent?"

Very different was the effect produced upon the young man's mind by a book of Friedrich Kapp's, entitled "Slavery in America," which had grown up out of a dense mass of previously accumulated material, and, by a remarkable coincidence, appeared at precisely this time.

At first, Roland could not comprehend how it was possible for a man to give so clear and lifelike a picture of facts so revolting. When he came to the ensuing passage, he wept aloud.

"The owners of the slave-ships are almost always foreigners, — Spaniards, Portuguese, and, alas!" here followed a dash that was like a dagger to the reader, — alas! even Germans."

Everywhere, by day and by night, Roland talked of what was agitating his soul; and, for the first time, he felt something like distrust of Benjamin Franklin. He learned, indeed, that Franklin was president of the Abolition Society in Philadelphia, but, also, that he, like the other great heroes of the American War for Independence, in his earnest desire for unanimity at the time the Union was founded, had trusted to the expectation that slavery would be extinguished within a lifetime by the mere increase of free labor.

This hope had proved deceptive, and Roland recalled with anguish that remark of Theodore Parker's, —

"All the great charters of humanity have been written in blood."

Often did Roland stand thoughtfully before a picture of Ary Scheffer's, which hung in the large sitting-room. It represented the adoration of Jesus; and there was a negro in it, stretching out his fettered arms toward the redeeming and consoling Saviour, with a most affecting expression. For two thousand years, this race had been extending its fettered hands toward the redemptive thought of mankind. Why had this lasted so long?

To Weidmann, Roland confessed what was weighing on his heart; and Weidmann succeeded in changing his sorrow into joy, that the time had now come in which these things would have an end. He was peculiarly severe upon those, who, like sentimental criminals, represent sin and crime as *evil*, and yet say, "There is no help for it. So it has been, and so it must be."

Goethe's verses now occurred to Roland, and he repeated them to Weidmann, who said, —

"It is the free man's inherited privilege to see absolute perfection in no man. Like Goethe, the Americans boast in having no mediæval conditions to overcome; but they have inherited slavery, which many even declare to be the natural condition of the laboring classes."

Weidmann gave Roland Abraham Lincoln's speech at the Cooper Institute in New York.

Roland was requested to read it aloud; but his voice choked, and his utterance was painfully agitated, when he came to the words, —

"Were we even to withhold our votes, Republicans, you may be sure the Democrats would not be satisfied. We could not stop there. We must leave off calling slavery a wrong, and justify it loudly and unconditionally; we must pull down our Free State Constitutions; the whole atmosphere must be disinfected from all taint of opposition to slavery, before they will cease to believe that all their troubles proceed from us.

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"And since the Southerners pretend that slavery is a righteous institution, honorable to mankind, the logical inference is, that it ought universally to be recognized as a moral good and a social blessing, and everywhere introduced.

"Our sense of duty forbids such a thought. And, if so, then let us stand by our duty fearlessly and effectively. Let us be diverted by none of those sophistical contrivances wherewith we are so industriously plied and belabored, — contrivances such as seeking for some middle ground between the right and wrong, vain as the search for a man who should be neither a living man nor a dead man, — such as a policy of 'don't care' on a question about which all true men do care, — such as Union appeals beseeching true Union men to yield to Disunionists, reversing the divine rule, and calling not sinners but the righteous to repentance.

"Neither let us be slandered from our duty by false accusations against us; nor frightened from it by menaces of destruction to the Government, nor of dungeons to ourselves. Let us have faith that right makes might, and, in that faith, let us, to the end, dare to do our duty as we understand it."

Tears rose to Roland's eyes. He glanced up at the picture where the slave was stretching out his fettered hands; and within him rose the words, "Thou art free."

CHAPTER XIII.

IN THE BOND OF BROTHERHOOD.

"THE bees we brought from Europe are flying out into the spring air," wrote Lilian from New York.

At Mattenheim, also, spring was close at hand. Out-door work became pressing; sunshine and hail followed one another in swift succession; but the buds were swelling, and verdure refreshed the eye. In the new shoots, or *sleeping eyes*, as they are called, choice grafts were set, that the tree henceforward might bear richer fruit. The same thing was to take place elsewhere.

One evening, when they were all together at Mattenheim, Weidmann read a letter from Doctor Fritz, in which he described the base league of the so-called Knights of the Golden Circle. A network of their societies extended over all the Southern States, and they had their accomplices even in the North.

They conducted a kind of criminal court by means of signs; and murders and secret executions without number were accomplished by their means.

He added that if one wanted to realize the entire range of man's capabilities, both for virtue and vice, he had but to offset against this band a character like Seward's.

While they were still pondering upon this intelligence, a letter with the royal seal arrived, containing expressions of high consideration for Weidmann, together with the Prince's request that he would inform young Sonnenkamp Banfield that no obstacle existed to his entering the military service, and that especial pains would be taken to show the young man, personally, all due regard."

"It cannot be," said Roland with a fixed look. "Too late!"

He expressed his gratitude, however, for the kindness of the Prince, and added with an accent of deep pain, that it was a comfort to know that the privilege of fellowship was restored to him.

"You shall have one of a different kind," said Weidmann. "You shall be received with your brother and friend, the Herr Captain, into our Order. Strictly speaking, you are too young; but we will show you how much we honor you."

In the evening, it rained steadily; and as Weidmann lay beside the window, gazing out upon the landscape, he called Roland to his side, and said, —

"These are pleasant hours, my son, in which we can look out of the window, and know that the rain is quickening and refreshing all things. A spirit who has awakened and refreshed the souls of many men, a benefactor who has renovated the being of numbers of his fellow-creatures, must experience in tranquil and elevated hours a similar joy. Rejoice that this happiness may be yours also. If I am not here to welcome you back from the war, know that I feel this on your behalf, and be thankful for it."

"Is the crisis, then, so near?"

"Yes. I have by me a letter from my nephew, and I tell you that the time has come."

Roland shuddered. He seized Weidmann's arm, and held it fast.

Weidmann continued, —

"My nephew writes, it is true, that they think the war will not last long; and that those who have enlisted hope to return to their homes in a few weeks. I think otherwise. You will be quite early enough for the great struggle. Rejoice that you are prepared for it beforehand."

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Roland hastened to Eric; and the latter said, —

"Give me your hand, Roland: I go with you!"

Adams approached them with flashing eyes, and cried, —

"We will all go, — all."

They embraced one another, as though the world's deliverance had arrived.

They passed a sleepless night; and, on the morrow, Roland and Eric rode to the Villa. They made known their resolution, and Manna responded, —

"I shall go too."

But she gave Eric a look which was perfectly intelligible to him; for it said, "You approve, then, of the son's taking the field against the father."

Eric told her that he had sent by way of Paris a notice to the Confederate journal which Sonnenkamp had designated, couched in terms which he alone would understand, to the effect that Roland would join the land-forces of the Union, hoping that he should not encounter his father, who was probably in the naval service.

Eric found it difficult to restrain Roland, and to convince him that days must elapse before their departure. They went together to the Major, who said, —

"It is all right! Now you must join! Brother Weidmann told me long since that you were to be initiated before engaging in this philanthropic struggle. And now let me tell you that our bond is especially effective in war. You will receive a sign; and, if you make that sign, no enemy, even though his weapon were raised against you, can kill you face to face; and you cannot kill any one who gives you this sign. Yes, my dear brothers, I must begin to call you so, all the good in this world has been wrought by Freemasons; for those who have wrought it have all been Freemasons at heart, if not in reality. But I'll say no more. Brother Weidmann will tell you all. Now go! I must be off to the castle. It has come at last."

Once up at the castle, the Major wandered about, saying to himself, over and over again, —

"If the Builder of all the worlds will only suffer me to hold together! I want this and one thing more, and then I shall be satisfied!"

. . . . . .

Men are coming and going; workmen are hammering; the Major's long cherished wish is fulfilled. There is to be a great Masonic celebration at the castle, and what a celebration! Eric, Roland, and Adams are to be received into the order.

From all the surrounding country, men came flocking to the castle. The Major went with Roland, the Architect with Adams, the Banker, who, with his daughter-in-law, was visiting at Villa Eden, accompanied Eric. At the castle, the three separated, and each was taken into a room by himself. Presently the Major came to Roland, and took away all the money and jewelry he had about him. Shortly after, men appeared who bandaged the eyes of each of the candidates. They were then conducted through long passages, up stairs and down, until they seemed to emerge into the open air. At last, they were told to stop, and sternly reproved for venturing to intrude here; but they remained firm.

Roland was comforted by the sound of Weidmann's voice, although it seemed to come from a great distance. The latter said that their being led blindfold by friends who saw, signified that they must learn to trust those who were pledged to afford them guidance and protection in life. Voices now called out, that it was time to removed the bandages.

"No," cried a powerful voice: "Roland, I cannot admit you."

Roland did not know this voice. What did it mean? What was required of him?

"Back, back! you stand on the brink of an abyss!" was shouted on all sides.

Roland's knees shook. The first voice continued, —

"Roland, are you ready to renounce all that you now possess, or will ever call your own, to become naked, poor, and helpless as you were by nature? Will you relinquish all your wealth, whether justly or unjustly acquired? Speak!"

"Speak, speak!" cried a chorus of voices. "Will you become poor?"

"Speak!" the voices repeated; and the question was asked for the third time, "Will you renounce all, and become naked, poor, and helpless?"

"No. I will not!"

A pause ensued: then Weidmann said in a re-assuring tone, "And why not?"

"Because it is not my duty, and I have no right to relinquish what was intrusted to me, — to transfer my responsibilities even to the highest and noblest. I am required myself to watch and work."

"Where is your obedience? Can you be a soldier, a fighter in the cause of humanity, and not obey? Do you know what obedience is?"

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"I think I do. I am ordered, for my part of the great campaign, to hold a certain post, and I pledge my life that I will be faithful without knowing why I am stationed just there. This is a soldier's duty, as I understand it. But in life it seems to me different. What right have you, more than another, to say, 'Intrust your possessions to us, that we may dispose of them as we think fit'? Here I stand, with I know not whom about me: I only know the voice of my noble friend Weidmann, and him I trust. Wherever he is, I will take my place at his side, and stand there blindfold. My eyes are bandaged; but I can look within, and I know that I am in duty bound, according to my strength and my wisdom, with the free assistance of others, to make the best of my life and endowments; but I will not give myself and my life away blindfold. Take me back! Reject me if I am wrong; but I cannot do otherwise."

"Off with the bandages! Off with the bandages!" was now vociferated for the third time by the whole assembly.

The strains of an organ were heard in the distance. Roland's bandage was removed, and a veil thrown over his head, that he might not be dazzled by the light.

When the veil was removed, he stood with Eric on one side and Adams on the other.

Weidmann spoke the words of initiation; and Roland, kneeling, humbly took the oath, with Eric's hand resting on his right shoulder, and Adams's on his left. Swords clashed, and in the distance singing was heard with an organ accompaniment.

The powerful singer whom we heard at Herr Endlich's entertainment, and at Wolfsgarten, sang here in the arched hall a pathetic air in a rich bass voice; and all hearts were gently soothed.

Roland arose. Weidmann kissed him, and afterwards embraced his brother Eric on the right, and his brother Adams on the left. They received the signs; and the so-called sign of distress, in particular, moved Roland deeply.

Eric, Roland, and Adams were now led out of the hall, and received back their money and jewels, the Major remarking, —

"You did bravely, young — forgive me — my brother!"

On returning to the hall they all rose; and Weidmann, bidding Roland and Eric take Adams's hand, began as follows, —

"Here, while we clasp our dusky brother in our arms, you see what we are! Through the jubilations of our century, a sound pierces, which, in time to come, shall be heard no more: it is the sound of clashing chains, of the fetters wherewith our fellow-men have been bound. Henceforth, these chains shall be but an emblem, a melancholy symbol. We who are men, and who want to be men fully and entirely, we take one another by the hand, and form a living chain. My brothers, you will be told, and, perchance, will tell yourselves, that our Order is antiquated, without significance in these modern times; but I tell you it will never be antiquated, never insignificant, for they who are dedicated to the service of the free Spirit must ever hold one another in a living clasp.

"We know the deficiencies of our Order. It is a matter of great difficulty to found an association firmly upon a universal thought apart from any historical basis. This is our principal disadvantage as compared with the Church. Hence enthusiasts and hypocrites seek for an historical foundation; nevertheless, our Order is the stronghold of virtue; and its unity is doubly formidable in that it is a league of free men; for free men will not suffer themselves to be bound. Yet our league, were its name never mentioned, would have a most important bearing upon the solution of the social problem, as it is called, of which the slavery question is only a part. And it is the thing we want, not the name. No deliverance was ever wrought by mere calculation, and there can be no permanent effect produced without the co-operation of love. The lust of pleasure and the lust of gain would seem to be the essential characteristics of our time; yet I, and we all, proclaim aloud, Great is our century! Europe, with her ancient culture and her waning nobility, is endeavoring to lay all men under an obligation to labor: America and Russia, to render all labor free. Ever since I beheld the great millennial wave bearing down upon me, I have lived a new and happy life. I have been filled with holy confidence; and, all unseen, our league is working towards the same end.

"Two principles are contending in this world, egoism and humanity. We meet selfishness by benevolence. The more thou servest others in love, the freer art thou. The more thou givest of thyself, the richer art thou. To every man we say, 'First free thyself from servitude.' Great things in this world come from small beginnings. To every one of you and to myself I say, 'Begin by abolishing slavery in thyself!' We have all a slave within us, a slave to precedent, to inertia, to obsequiousness. Free this slave within, and then wilt thou be

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worthy to emancipate the slaves around thee. And now, my new brothers, consider this. As the signs of intelligence which you have received are not verbal, but visible, sensible motions, as our own mutual understanding supersedes and transcends speech, so is it with the idea of our Order. It is something older and broader than all single religious associations. We seek repose and peace in labor and trade. To our doctrine each may give his own private interpretation, as every man speaks in his own peculiar voice, which can never be exactly imitated. The deed alone, the free, righteous, noble deed, cannot be explained away, cannot be misunderstood, cannot be affected by any individual. Ours is a brotherhood of noble deeds."

Turning to Roland he said, —

"To you, my young brother, much has been given; and you must say with your brother here, so rich in intellectual gifts, and this your other brother, now armed for free labor, 'What I am, and what I have, I have not *of* myself, and so I have it not *for* myself.' Self-sacrifice is self-exaltation. Your own highest good is the good of the whole world. What you do, do not with the hope of reward from another; but be yourself your own reward. A revolution is now taking place in the minds of men, such as there must have been wrought when they first learned the fact of the motion of the planet on which we live. Mankind, who had always known slavery, and believed that its continuance was right, were long unable to conceive a different state of things; and it was thus with the authors of that great sacred book. I say, mankind could not conceive of labor as other than a disgrace, a curse pronounced upon the race. But now, not by any new and external revelation, but through a free and natural unfolding of knowledge, we are enabled to get beyond this view. A new age is beginning. Labor is no longer a disgrace, but an honor; no longer a curse, but a blessing. No formal religion can sanctify labor; for it belongs not to the other world, but eternally to this. Were a medal to be struck to commemorate our century, it should bear upon the face the symbol of free labor, and upon the reverse, that of the love of nature. Neither has yet been represented by art. Our idea has not yet attained to many-hued loveliness, and to a picturesque variety; for philanthropy is colorless like pure light. Walk therefore in the light, and die for the love of your kind. You have lived in the light; live ever so, and in the eternal ideas of self-sacrifice and brotherly love."

Deeply moved, Eric made a brief reply. Roland, too, was called upon, but could only say, —

"My brother and teacher has expressed all that I feel."

Adams also offered a few words. He would try to show himself worthy the honorable brotherhood which had been conferred upon him.

The three now seated themselves in the ranks of the brotherhood, and took part in the transaction of some urgent and existing business.

With ready and practised eloquence, the Major's host, the Grand Master, informed them that the Pope had condemned all Masonic leagues; and he read a protest to be adopted by the present lodge.

Weidmann asked if any brother desired to offer any comment, and the Doctor came forward, and said, —

"I move the rejection of this protest, and also the open acknowledgment of that notoriously false principle with which we are reproached in the bull of excommunication. I find Masonry as wordy at home as it is dastardly abroad; for dastardly it is, not to be perfectly open. It is all true! We recognize and acknowledge man to be morally complete, independent of any positive church; not necessarily hostile to the church, but independent of it. But this prevaricating, and ducking under ecclesiastical phrases, this spiritless sailing under false colors," —

"A little less vehemently, if you please," observed Weidmann.

Quietly, but firmly, the Doctor continued:

"I move that the protest be rejected."

The Grand Master gazed helplessly about. He, with all his honors on his head, bring forward a proposition, and not have it accepted! —

The Doctor at length begged Eric, as one not yet bound by the traditions prevaling here, to explain his meaning more precisely.

Eric arose and said, that, though strongly inclined to agree with the Doctor, he was not quite sure where right lay. He could only permit himself to quote the words of a noble spirit now passed away. Clodwig had seen, as in a vision upon his death-bed, the combatants of the present day dividing into two hostile camps, one of which rallied around the Pope, the other around the standard of free thought. A third party, agreeing partly with the former, and partly with the latter, he thought impossible.

The protest was rejected; but the Doctor's proposition, openly to acknowledge the justice of the Papal animadversions, was also set aside. At the close of the celebra-

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then the brethren sat down to a banquet. Roland was once more welcomed by the Banker with peculiar heartiness.

The youth asked the Major in a low voice, why Professor Einsiedel and Knopf were not members of the order.

"They are natural members of the association, answered the Major.

As they left the castle by the light of the full moon, Roland said to the Major, —

"To have lived a day like this makes death seem easy."

"I say with Claus," answered the Major, "we won't look for death till the very last."

And so their high-strung mood passed over into merriment.

On the following morning, the Major begged for the Banker's advice on a matter bearing decisively upon his life; and in which the Banker could assist him more than any one else.

The Banker declared himself ready to render any assistance.

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CHAPTER XIV.

A VOLUNTARY SACRIFICE AND A FULFILMENT OF DESTINY.

FLOWERS of all sorts were blooming in the conservatories, buds upon the artistically trained espalier trees were opening, and the park was resounding with songs of the birds, restlessly chirping and flying about at this time of wooing and mating.

Never before had Eric enjoyed the dawn of spring so intensely as now. He was filled with the joy of love, and the heavy burdens which Fate had laid upon him seemed like an accident, a dream, which he could all at once shake off.

Early in the morning he would stroll in the park; a peculiar feeling of joyousness would come over him at the thought that Spring would soon reign over this, his own estate. Why should not these trees, these meadows, these plantations put on new bloom and verdure, now that they were his? And while wondering whether it would really ever be his lot to pass here an industrious and peaceful life, he could not free himself from a feeling of compassion for Sonnenkamp. The man had planted and fostered all this — where was he now?

Manna and the Professorin were walking with the Banker's daughter-in-law, who had been drawn thither by her desire to know Roland's sister, and her much praised mother-in-law. The three ladies had quickly formed a league of friendship, based on the foundation of a fine and liberal culture. Yet, though the inmates of the Villa were so happy together, each one harbored the restless longing to depart.

The ladies entered the conservatory.

A wave of aromatic perfumes floated towards them, and flowed around them. Their eyes were refreshed by the thousand hues of the newly-opened blossoms.

The Professorin spoke of the rest she should find in watching over the culture of these plants.

Manna expressed her intention of devoting herself, in the days that were to come, to botany, both theoretical and practical. The Banker's daughter-in-law promised soon to do the same.

With a feeling of pleasurable excitement, they sat in the green-house, where to-day, for the first time, the great windows had been opened. Manna sent for her harp, and they found that the Banker's daughter-in-law could sing several songs of which the harpist knew the accompaniment. It was an hour filled with the pure joy of existence, untroubled by one thought of the past, by one anxiety for the morrow.

Manna had caused a beautiful myrtle-tree to be placed on the table, wishing to weave from its boughs a crown for Lina, whose marriage was to be solemnized almost immediately. As she sat thus, with the blooming branches before her, Weidmann entered, and said joyously, —

"This tree bears leaves and blossoms enough for threefold bridal wreaths, and I hope they will be worn."

Then he told them that he came as the Major's ambassador, to summon the ladies' attention to the story of Fräulein Milch.

The Major came in with the Fräulein, who, casting a strange look at the Banker's daughter-in-law, said, —

"You are to be present too."

The Major, having called thither the Banker and Professor Einsiedel, declared his readiness to yield to the instance of his friends, and reside at the Villa, in order to superintend and keep everything in good condition; but only with the stipulation that Fräulein Milch should at last be released from her vow; stating that she was ready, after having related her life-history, to submit to the verdict of their friends, the Banker and the Professor.

"Another story!" moaned the Professor. He dreaded the idea of pronouncing a judgment which was wholly without results, as in the case of Sonnenkamp.

The Major, however, begged so urgently that he consented, and Fräulein Milch began: —

"You, Herr Professor, are just like my father, and yet you are very different! He, too, was a learned man, but in a very different sphere.

"You have many of his habits, and, if you accompany me to the altar, it will seem as though my father were with me, although you are much younger. And you, my friends, — you, Frau Professorin, who have honored me before knowing my life, and you, Fräulein Manna, who, after conquering a strong prejudice, have given me your rich love, — you shall now be made really acquainted with me. But you (turning to the Banker), you will best be able to pass sentence upon me; for you are a Jew, as I am a Jewess."

All were astounded.

Fräulein Milch waited quietly until her auditors had recovered from their amazement, then continued: —

"I am the daughter of a learned Hebrew, and an only daughter. I had one brother, of whom we shall hear later. My father was a noble and pious man; he was considered a scholar of great discernment, with fine polemical gifts; but in life he was

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childishly simple and — why should I not say it? — shiftless. He read the sacred books from morning till night.

"My mother sprang from a wealthy house, had once been blessed in early childhood by the hands of Moses Mendelssohn; from this it was predicted that she would one day marry a man of great knowledge. This proved true. According to the will of her parents she became the wife of my father, on account of his piety and learning.

"Such was the way in which the opulent Israelites formerly exhibited their gratitude and respect for a learned man of their faith, as the Christians bestowed gifts upon the convents. The Jews could found no establishments. They had no protection; all their goods were movable, and thus they devoted a portion of their wealth to the support of our scientific men.

My mother's whole being was absorbed in her adoration of my father. The quiet and uniformity of life; the calm content which reigned in my parental abode; how the poor were fed; how our entire existence was nought save the pause between one pious deed and another, between one festival and another, no one present can know but you (turning towards the Banker), you alone can conceive of it. I myself often recall it as a dream. In winter, when my father was unable to go out, the community came to my father, to unite together in prayer in his study, and, while a little child, I used to hear much discourse on worldly events.

"What did we know of the world?

"The world belonged to the officials outside, to the soldiers. They were, in our eyes, beings moving in a fabulous realm, into which we could never enter.

"My brother, who was a handsome man — he resembled Herr Dournay — formed a friendship with a young drummer named Grassler, who was billetted in our house. We were all made perfectly happy by the reverence which this youth showed towards my father, whom he regarded as a saint, and by his gentleness and timidity when in his presence. I yet remember, as though it were but yesterday, how I stood on the steps, turning round and round with my hand one of the knobs of the balustrade, when the drummer said to me: —

"'Yes, Rosalie, when you are grown up, and I have become an officer, I will come back and take you away with me.'

"He went away drumming; but I kept hearing those strange words in the sound of the drum, and still stood on the steps, twirling the knob, while the whole world seemed to whirl with me. But I beg pardon, I am growing too prolix."

"No, go into details as much as you like."

"But I cannot," replied Fräulein Milch. "Well, then, they went to the war. My brother fell. Conrad came back. He had become an ensign, and he brought back to my father my brother's little prayer-book, its cover and leaves pierced by a ball. My father and my mother and I sat on the ground, mourning for seven days. Conrad came and sat with us: he honored our foreign observances.

"Father seated himself again among his sacred books; but, whereas he used formerly to read with a low, humming sound, he now spoke the words aloud and with violence. He seemed obliged to put a constraint upon his thoughts, which would go out after his son.

"Time gradually healed our wounds. My brother had long been at rest in his grave, — who can say where? Conrad had returned to his home. I was seventeen. It was on Easter eve; we had solemnized the Passover, and my father discoursed much on the liberation from servitude, in commemoration of which we keep Easter, and lamented the oppression beneath which we were sighing still. He loved Jesus heartily and warmly, and only bewailed unceasingly the misuse of his name as an authority for the misery into which we, members of his race, were plunged. That night I heard him say that our great and wise Rabbi, Moses ben Maimon, had taught that Jesus had overthrown heathen idolatry; that he was not Messias, but his fore-runner!

"It was late at night ere we went to rest. I slept in a room adjoining that of my parents. Thus I heard my father say to my mother: —

"'How wretched we Jews are! there is that splendid man, so loyal, so good-hearted, Conrad Grassler, returned. He has worked his way up to a captaincy, and retired on a major's pension, and now here he comes and asks for our Rosalie. If the good man were only of our faith, if he were a Jew, how gladly would I give him my child! I could not desire a better husband for her; but, as it is, it cannot be, and God forgive my sin in thinking of it!'

"I heard this from my chamber, and that night, though I was still under my parents' roof, my spirit was already far away, out into the wide world, where the officers lived, and the soldiers, and those who owned it.

"Father had nothing against Conrad if it had not been for that one thing. A voice within me repeated this all night long.

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And in the morning, while my father and mother were in the synagogue, I sat alone with my prayer-book. See this little prayer-book. It is a devotional manual for women, composed by my father — but my thoughts were not upon it. How still it was! I was alone in the house. No one was to be seen in the streets, for the whole community was at the synagogue. I seated myself in the middle of the room; I did not wish to look out of the window; Conrad would surely be passing by.

"But how did he look? How wonderful that he had kept that promise made to me in my childhood! What had he become? How would I seem to him?

"Then, I cannot tell how it was, but as I was standing at the window, looking out, I saw Conrad, grown into a noble-looking man. I withdrew from the window, but then came footsteps on the stairway, and my heart throbbed as though it would burst. Conrad stood alone in the world; he is a military orphan."

A smile passed round the circle of listeners, and Fräulein Milch went on: —

"I told Conrad what my father had said to my mother, the night before. I could give him up for my parents' sake; but he was not in duty bound to renounce me, and I had not the right to relinquish for him, and it was settled that I should elope with him.

"My father returned from the synagogue, and I have never felt a heavier sorrow than when he laid his hand in blessing on my head, as is the custom with us. I would not disturb the joy of the feast, and not until it was ended — oh! I ruined the joy of his whole life! There were no more feasts for him — did I flee with Conrad. I persuaded myself that my father would give us his blessing, when he should see that it could not be otherwise. We wrote to him, but he did not answer. He sent us word, through a friend, that he had had two children, who were dead, and for whom he earnestly prayed that it might be well with them in the other world. And one word more he sent me, — 'Thou seekest honor before the world, and for honor hast thou forsaken thy father.' I wrote back protesting with a solemn oath that I had wished to obtain no earthly honor through Conrad, promising to clothe myself with humiliation and shame in the eyes of the world, and that oath I have kept until the present day.

"Conrad soon received tidings of my mother's death, and my father followed her in a few months. I inherited a small fortune, and we went to the Rhine. Down below, yonder, we lived twelve years in a little lower Rhenish village, hidden from all the world, happy in each other. We needed nothing from the world but ourselves. Conrad wished constantly to marry me; but I had vowed to robe myself in ignominy during the whole period of my existence. We might have been united here by civil contract. That, too, I refused. I used to attend church, impelled by the desire to pray in common with my fellow human beings. I had my quiet corner, and while the organ was pealing, and a divine service different from my own was being solemnized, I would sit alone and pray out of the prayer-book which my father had composed, and from the other, which my brother had had on the field of battle, and which had rested on his heart till it beat no more. I was in the church and was no stranger, for there were people beside me, praying after another fashion, but to the same Spirit which I also invoke, and this Spirit will know and explain why men turn themselves to him in such different ways. Now I believe I may revoke my sentence of self-excommunication."

"You may, you must," said the Banker, speaking first, and rising as he spoke. The Professorin rose and embraced the narrator.

"Well, then, will you hear the close, too?" resumed Fräulein Milch. All were still, and she proceeded: —

"We came hither. How I have lived here, you know. At our change of residence, Conrad expressed his wish for a formal union, but I preferred not to be called Frau Majorin; it was to me a constant penance and chastisement for my faithlessness to my parents and my desertion of all my people. Now we lived in faithfulness, in oneness, without any formal tie. Thus we have lived, and now it is fulfilled."

"I shall go with you to the wedding," cried the Professor and Weldmann.

But the latter now took Manna's hand, saying: —

"Do you know for whom is the third bridal wreath which shall be woven from this myrtle-tree?"

Manna trembled, and he went on: —

"It is for you. You have struggled and waited. Help me, Frau Dournay."

The Mother, too, took Manna's hand. The Major, hastening out, came back bringing Eric, to whom, on their way, he said a great many things mixed up in strange confusion.

The following day saw the three couples united, and no one can say who were the happiest, Manna and Eric, the Major and Fräulein Milch, or Lina and the Architect.

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Rooms were fitted up in the castle, and there Manna and Eric were to pass the first days of their marriage.

They were sitting at the wedding-feast, which had been tastefully arranged under the direction of Joseph, who was himself betrothed. Manna and Eric had helped him to buy an inn at the capital, and he had plighted his troth to the daughter of mine host of the Victoria. Now, however, he had returned of his own accord, and was the servant of the house as formerly.

Very modestly did Knopf bring forward three different poems which he had composed for the triple wedding; into these he had skilfully interwoven all sorts of little occurrences, to the amusement of all.

Eric whispered to Manna, as he sat by her side: "I am glad that I have already danced with you. I feel as though I must now whirl round with you in the dance, and forget everything. But I must hush: our good teacher is about to speak."

Einsiedel arose, with a smile upon his face, saying with sparkling eyes: "Come hither, you children of the Rhine, and I will teach you something. My pupil, here, Dr. Dournay, knows it, I shall only remind him of it; but to you I must say it: —

"All my thologies tell us of immortal gods; but they are not immortal by nature, they are only so by the divine drink, by means of nectar, wine, and mead: these are the potions which give eternal life; and, floating in the clouds, and drinking from the clouds, the deities become immortal, and with them the inspired breath of arisen souls. Yes, it is by drinking! Look here, see how the sun shines in this glass, and here the lightning is embosomed, the primitive life-fire. We drink, and are immortal, like the gods. And this is my desire! Drink always a drop of this divine draught from the ocean of ether, the spirit-sea, which undulates and floats over the world. Then you will be forever happy and immortal."

Evening came, and Manna and Eric went hand in hand to the castle.

The moon stood over the stream, bathing with trembling light tree and bush, where the buds were gently bursting and the nightingale unweariedly singing. The world was flooded with bliss.

For three days they remained alone at the castle, and on the third evening they came down again to Villa Eden.

CHAPTER XV.

A JOYOUS FAREWELL, AND HUMBOLDT'S BLESSING ON THE JOURNEY.

In the Carp Inn was a noisy hubbub. The Cooper, as young host, was merrily pouring the wine, and both fathers, the Screamer and the Sevenpiper, looked on delightedly, often clinking their ribbed glasses.

It was known throughout the whole region that the Cooper was a confidant of Roland and Eric. Now came the young men from all sides, wishing to be enrolled for the American war; there was even a deputation appeared from Weidmann's cement factory, begging for the passage-money for thirty-two men.

The Cooper had given information of what was going forward to Roland, who was highly excited by the news.

Now has come a use for his wealth. He would raise a regiment with which he would go to America. They would land, and the columns would march at once.

Eric, too, felt a great interest the carrying out of this plan, but Weidmann opposed it stoutly, affirming that we had no right to withdraw from Germany the strength needed for her development.

This objection was of no avail; but another remonstrance was decisive. He told Roland that President Lincoln would be absolutely obliged to take a step further, — he must arm the negroes. Then it might be Roland's part to give pecuniary assistance, and it would be far grander that the negroes themselves should fight for their own liberation and for that of their brethren.

Roland had been before the court, where he had been declared of age; he now came into the Carp Inn, where all were full of astonishment when the young man informed them that he should only take with him three young physcians — the Banker had undertaken the expenses of one of the three — that he should engage no one else, as the negroes themselves must fight for their liberty.

He went back to Villa Eden, accompanied by Claus.

There lived the Major.

He also made a wedding-tour, with the Frau Majorin. They stopped awhile in that part of the garden called Nice.

They went through the park and ascended the hill, where there was a view down the Rhine. The Major said in a tone of supreme satisfaction: —

"Now, Frau Majorin, here we are, on the highest mountain in Switzerland."

And at the lake he said: —

"Frau Majorin, will you have the goodness to admire the Lago Maggiore?"

They went through the conservatories, and the Major declared that the world had

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collected here its most beautiful show of flowers, in order to spare them the great annoyance of travelling. He besought his wife to excuse him if he did not show her the devotion of a newly married husband during the following days. So much had yet to be provided before the departure of the new knights of the Brotherhood.

There were, indeed, so many things to be settled, that Eric was at last obliged to entrust much that was essential to Weidmann and the Justice. Before he could start, he must obtain his discharge, as he was in the reserve corps. The reply to his application was, that the Prince desired a personal interview. He was obliged to go to the city, and was not a little surprised by the gracious and complimentary expressions of the Prince. He said that he was not willing to give such a man his discharge, but he would grant him leave of absence for an indefinite time.

Eric's pride, however, was very soon humbled, for the Prince hinted that Eric, now made the possessor of so much wealth, had better remain in the country.

During his stay in the city, officers also came to Eric, offering either to accompany or to follow him to America.

Eric positively declined all such offers.

Joseph the valet came with his betrothed. Means had been given him to set up an inn of his own in the capital, but he conducted himself like a servant of the house.

Fassbender's son, who had been working in the Banker's office, was going to the New World, wishing to engage in the occupation of his brother, who was an influential building-contractor. In compliance with the urgent request of Claus, he took with him a great quantity of birds, by which means he was to establish a regular bird-trade with the Old World.

The deaf-mute from the cement factory, to whom Roland had given a knife, came on the eve of their departure, bringing him a mug, on which was marked in very clumsy letters: "Come back."

Roland made permanent provision for the care of the forsaken youth.

It was very hard for Roland to take leave of the horses and dogs. He had wished to take Griffin with him, but gave up the idea when the difficulties of so doing were represented to him. Laying his hand on the dog's head, he said: —

"My old friend, I can't take you with me; I must leave much more than you behind me. I don't myself know how it will end. Just stay quietly here, and wait till I come back."

The dog looked up sadly at his master.

On the morrow there was a great pilgrimage from the Villa to the steamboat-landing.

They sent the carriages on before. Weidmann walked with Eric, holding his hand, the Major with Roland, and Knopf with the negro. Manna walked between the Professorin and the Major's wife. The Aunt and Professor Einsiedel had remained behind at the Villa. Roland wept; and Manna, weeping also, leaned on the arms of those who led her. Looking up at the churchyard, she said: —

"On the bank of this river we are at home: here rests our mother in the earth. I remember an old saying, but where it came from I do not know: —

"'The nomadic races wander and wander; but where they have dug a grave for one of their number, there they must finally remain.'"

Her voice failed her. After a time she went on: —

"There stand the trees which father planted."

Tears choked all further utterance.

Arrived at the landing, they found a great assemblage of people. Claus kept laughing and nodding, having made a merry night of it at the Carp, wishing to have one more good time before he went forth into the wide world.

The Cooper, now landlord of the Carp, and the Sevenpiper presented, in behalf of a large number of donors, a keg of virgin wine, crowned with fresh garlands.

Now the Screamer became animated, and speedily reckoned up what would be the daily portion of each of the travellers until their arrival in New York. It would be at least two bottles apiece; and he instantly tendered his services in despatching the virgin wine, as probably Eric would not drink his whole share, and perhaps Roland too would fall short.

The Gauger told in doleful fashion how the voyagers would to-day have the good luck of travelling with a young married couple, for the steamboat which was coming was called the "Beethoven," and the steward of the "Beethoven" had married the "Lorelei."

Eric and Manna sat by their mother, holding her hand; and she said to them consolingly: —

"Eric, spare your life; but should you fall in the great cause, I shall mourn, but I will not bewail your loss."

"Mother, I am confident of returning home alive out of this struggle; and yet, if I should fall, mother, be steadfast: I have lived the highest life, through you, through

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my father's, and through my Manna's, love."

The Mother silently pressed his hand.

Now came the Doctor and the Justice with their wives, and Lina with her husband. The Doctor put the finishing touch by imparting the intelligence, agitating to all, that Pranken had entered the Papal army.

Weidmann was much moved by this news; he exhorted Eric to keep uppermost in his thoughts, even above the grief of parting, the wonderful way in which all this had come to pass: Pranken there and he here. He expatiated on this with emphasis, and succeeded in his intention of dispelling personal sorrow by the consideration of universal views. That which this man and this youth had done in accordance with their own choice and the leadings of destiny, *that* was no longer at the disposal of their own individual free will, but was absorbed into, and had become a part of the great whole.

And now the real mirthfulness of Rhenish life began to display itself. The glee-club made its appearance with a band of music, and clear songs rang out from the pretty and graceful steamer which now came down the stream. The cannon were fired; the boat stopped; and hurried partings were made. Eric, Manna, and Roland kissed the Mother, who cried: —

"Be faithful to the end."

They were soon on board.

The steamer had pushed off, when a cry was heard. The dog Griffin had broken loose from the Cooper's hold upon his collar, sprung into the Rhine, and was swimming after the boat. She stopped once more: the dog was hoisted out of the water and taken along with them.

The party on shore waved their farewell signals, and were answered from the boat, as long as they could see each other; but for a long time after this, the gaze of the departing ones lingered on the Villa.

What will become of the house? What shall they be when they return? What kind of life will there be established?

As Manna stood leaning on Eric, something came softly up to them.

The dogs, Rose and Thistle, had forced their way aboard. Roland, who had likewise been standing lost in thought, suddenly brightened up, for Griffin was also with them.

And now they had a fresh surprise. No one had noticed that the Major had not been among those who had bid them good-bye. He now emerged from the cabin with his wife. He was now making his wedding tour, and accompanied the wanderers as far as the Lower Rhine. It seemed as if they had with them a goodly portion of the home.

There was music on board, and the Major soon brought up the steward and stewardess, to whom he introduced himself and his wife, and Eric and Manna, as newly-married couples.

"Yes," said he to Eric, "you know I have been a drummer. I'll tell you the story some time or other. Yes, when you come back you shall have it."

At the station before the Island, the Major and wife disembarked. Here they had dwelt in the first days of their union, and here they wished to be again for a day, and to show themselves as married people to those who had then been friendly toward them. The Major still waved his hand from the row-boat, and strove to show a cheerful countenance, but the tears ran down his cheeks, and as he bent over the side of the skiff, they flowed into the Rhine.

Silently they glided on, and, as they passed the Cloister Island, a flock of white doves were winging their way over it. The nightingales were singing so loud as to be heard, in spite of the continual plash of the paddle-wheels. The children of the Island were walking along the shore, two by two, and singing.

Manna sighed deeply, and wafted a greeting over to them.

No one imagined who was passing by, away, away to the New World.

When, at evening, the vessel stopped for the night, Eric remembered a sheet of paper which Weidmann had given him. He read it. It contained words from the close of Humboldt's Cosmos: —

"There are some races more civilized, more highly ennobled by culture than others, but there are no races nobler by nature. All are equally destined for freedom."

BOOK XV.

EXTRACTS OF LETTERS FROM AND TO THE NEW WORLD.

[Eric to his Mother.]

On board the BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

OUR ship bears the name which my father always uttered with peculiar fervor.

My mother!

I am transformed into a life full of novel excitement. I have seen the sea for the first time. Now I am living upon it, and I seem to be writing to you from another world.

A joyful event ushered us out of the Fatherland.

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As we drew near the shore, on the first evening, I espied a broad, benevolent, comfortable-looking man, at the window of the corner-house at the landing. He bowed to me, I returned the salutation, but did not recognize him. But when we were on board, he came up to us; it was Master Ferdinand, whom I had helped out at the musical festival.

I quickly told him our story, and he, with a despatch which could only have been inspired by disinterested kindness, collected his fellow artists, together with some cultivated amateurs of the town, and we sang and played far into the night.

With music in our souls we left the Rhine, — we left Germany.

Manna and Roland will write to you themselves; they are now on deck, reading the Odyssey: it is the only thing one ought to read here. All movement on the highways on shore, all household interests and surroundings, seem far removed.

Such a ship is a world in itself.

Herr Knopf, too, has had a wonderful meeting. He is writing to the Major: get him to show you the letter. One thing more I must tell you about.

We reached Liverpool at evening, and intended to rest there a day. On the next morning I was standing alone, looking at the harbor, and thinking how Liverpool was the first English port in which slave-ships were fitted out, when I was roused from my reverie over the changing events of history, by seeing an outward-bound vessel weighing anchor. On the deck stood a man, who, I cannot doubt, was Sonnenkamp. He now wears a full beard; but I recognized him in spite of it. He has either been in Europe all the time, or else has returned here. He seemed to recognize me, took off his broad-brimmed hat, beckoned to some one, and a figure appeared which I could not recognize with certainty, but I think it was Bella.

I learned from the brother-masons, to whom Weidmann had given me a letter of introduction, that a man quite answering to the description of Sonnenkamp, was sending a shipload of arms and ammunition to some Southern port.

I dare not think how terrible, at this juncture, a meeting would have been.

Strangely enough, as I was walking with Manna at noon, through the city, she said to me: "I feel as if I must meet father here. I keep thinking he will come round some corner, on one side or the other!" I do not think I have done wrong in not telling her of what I saw.

Most agonizing is the thought that, perhaps, father and son may fight against each other in opposing armies. My consolation is, that Sonnenkamp, being an old sailor, will probably enter the navy.

Roland is the darling of the whole ship. He is indefatigably zealous to learn about the arrangement of the vessel, and about all the duties of the crew. He is busy with them first in one place, then in another, and I am glad to see that, by this means, all his hard thinking and speculation are driven away.

We have favoring winds.

Very merry, too, is the chirping and singing of the birds that Claus has brought with him. The blackbird strikes an attitude on her perch, like that of a renowned singer on the stage, looks coquettishly round on the bystanders, and sings her "Rejoice in your life." You know she never gets beyond that: but we like to have it said and sung to us: "Rejoice in your life."

On the second evening out.

Now it is night. Manna is alone on deck, looking at the stars. What a wondrous world! Overhead the innumerable stars, and around us the boundless sea. I feel as if I must, on this voyage, let all hard thinking, reflection, and speculation take wings and fly away, in order that I may tread the soil of the New World as simply a man of resolute action. There has always been a vein of romance running through my life and nature. What is it that leads me thither, to stake my whole being in a great crisis of human history? No longer to be a mere spectator, but to act, to live, and, perhaps — no, mother, an inward assurance tells me I shall come home alive from this conflict.

Home! Home! Oh, mother, my soul wings its way across to it, over the boundless billows of life: we are with you, and Villa Eden makes true its name. And yet, if Fate has otherwise decreed, be firm: your son has been perfectly happy; he has enjoyed all the fulness of life. I have had you, father, Manna, knowledge, pure aspirations, action. All has been mine.

Here I sit, and the billows bear me on. We rise and fall with the waves, and well for him who feels, as I now do, that the goal at which he aims is a good one.

It seems as if your hand were on my brow: I am well and free. And, oddly enough, I see myself in my mind's eye, transported to the University town again. Now it is evening; in the parlor at the "Post," the regular guests are seated, who meet there every evening, though, in truth,

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they cannot endure each other. They sit round a table covered with black oil-cloth, with their glasses before them, discussing the affairs of the world, telling anecdotes, and hoaxing one another, and then the talk turns upon that unsteady adventurer, Doctor Dournay. I am a fruitful theme for them. Tall Professor Whitehead lights a match, and says with satisfaction, "I always knew he would desert Science," and then the everlasting "Extraordinary" says—Enough! I was once on another planet, and believed myself at home there.

. . . . . .

I have not written for five days, and now, mother, the man who is writing to you has been, with his nearest and dearest, in the jaws of death.

We have lived through a storm such as our captain, a seaman of three-and-twenty years' experience, has never seen before.

I must confess, I was not among the brave. And, in the midst of the tempest, —such is the double-action of the soul, — I could not help often thinking of the everlasting "Extraordinary," at the long table in the Post, speaking of my death, and lamenting his having abandoned poetical composition: our end would have made a fine subject. The coolest in the midst of the storm were Roland and Knopf. The latter, however, was not with us, but on the forward deck with his betrothed. Manna held me clasped in her arms. We wished to die together.

Oh, why should I recount our dangers? They are past. Now that we are safe, we talk of them no more.

On the next morning, when the sky was so clear, and the sea so calm, we celebrated a betrothal on board. It was friend Knopf who was betrothed; he will write you a more detailed account of it all. The cask of virgin wine, which had been given to us, was shared among the crew on that day. The Rhine poured joy into the veins of us all.

There was singing, dancing, jubilation. All the flags were hoisted, and at table friend Knopf made an address no less amusing than touching. I believe he is going to send Fräulein Milch his speech. We had music, too; Knopf played the flute, and persuaded Manna to bring her harp on deck. All the passengers and the sailors stood around her with suspended breath, and, when she had ended, shouted and huzzaed.

In three days we shall each land; I do not know whether I shall write again till then; my first step on the soil of the New World will be to send you this letter, unless we should meet, on the way, some vessel which will take it to Europe.

To Europe!

I feel raised so high above the world, that it seems as if I could play with whole continents.

Be joyful in thinking of your happy son,
ERIC.

[Knopf to the Major and Fraulein Milch.]

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER,

Oh, how delightful it is that I, who have never been able to call any one by these names, can now apply them to you!

In the red blank-book which you, dear sister, gave me, are many notes of travel, which I hope to be able, some time, to write out: now I cannot. Out with the best thing: I am betrothed!!! It occurs to me, while making these three exclamation marks, that their form has a meaning. They seem to me like the image of a comet. Do ask Professor Einsiedel if I have not made a great scientific discovery.

Do you remember, dear sister, my telling you of my meeting a girl with two boys in the forest, that time when I was coming to find our friend Herr Dournay? That girl is my betrothed. Her name is Rosalie, like yours. She looks enough like you to be your sister. Yes, she is your sister. She has brown eyes, like you.

"But who is she, then?" I hear you ask, laying aside your sewing and looking at me with both eyes — I had almost said, with both hands.

Well, just let me tell you quietly.

Now, then, the maiden whom I met in the green-wood, my wood-maiden, is the daughter of a teacher, and — I beg you to hear this respectfully — she has passed her own examination as a teacher, and her brothers are splendid fellows. I did not venture to approach the girl, although I recognized her at the first glance. I tried to ingratiate myself with the brothers — and said one day to the smaller one, who took to me at once — "Tell your sister I met her in the forest, last May, on her way to chapel with you; she had on a brown dress."

"Why don't you tell her so yourself?" asked the little fellow.

I had no time to answer him; for just then my wood-maiden came along, and began reproving her brother for annoying the strange gentleman, when the little one shouted, "Why, it's the gentleman you imitate, when you show how he looked over his spectacles at you."

Now it was out. She had made fun of me? She too? I took off my glasses, and

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must confess, I should have liked to throw them into the sea, and myse.f after them.

"What did she say?" you ask.

She spoke kindly and heartily: she said she had not ridiculed me — Oh, I don't remember the rest — she gave me her hand, and ——

I cannot write it; you shall hear all about it sometime, and, even if I don't describe it, you know just the same: I, Emil Knopf, girls' tutor through so many generations, am engaged to an angel. That is a hackneyed phrase. Who knows whether angels could stand the teachers' examination?

I say with Herr Weidmann: I should just like to know how men can manage not to believe in God. Could only human understanding devise such a story as this? I had not the slightest idea where she came from, or who she was; and now she is put aboard the same ship for me, or you may say, I am put on board, and now the war breaks out, and she has an uncle in America — It is a fine thing that there is an uncle in America. I think I have met my father-in-law. And do you know what is the best thing?

To have a beloved one to live through a storm.

In the midst of the storm, and it was no ordinary one, I thought, 'How would it have been, if you had been obliged to sink into the sea alone, and had never known what it is to kiss a maiden's lips, and how it feels to have a soft hand stroke your face, and even to be told, "You are handsome," — just think of it! I, Emil Knopf, famous as the least dangerous of men, I am handsome! Oh, how blind were all mothers and daughters in the blessed land of Uniformingen! Rosalie has a little mirror, and when I look into it, I am really handsome — I am pleased with myself. But do not think I have gone mad; I am in full possession of my mental powers. Herr Major, I pledge myself to explain to you the law of the centre of gravity and of the line of gravitation. I retain my understanding intact.

One thing, however, is hard for me. I find that I am no poet. If I were, I should now, of necessity, compose such poems that the whole world would hear of nothing else. The sailors could not refrain from singing them, nor the soldiers, coming away from the parade ground, nor the white-handed young lady at the piano, nor the journeyman by the roadside, when he takes off his oil-cloth hat and lays his head on his pack. Oh, I feel as if I must have something which should appease the hunger of the whole world, crying to all men, "Do you not see how beautiful the world is?"

But now I beg for a wedding gift. You and Fräulein Milch must have your photographs taken, for my sake. Oh, excuse my writing Fräulein Milch — I mean the Majorin. I see that I have kept writing Fräulein Milch thoughout the whole letter. Do not be vexed if I do not alter it.

In the New World I shall write again; but now not another word. I have written enough, my whole life long, and now I wish to do nothing but frolic and kiss. Oh! that beautiful air from Don Giovanni occurs to me.

I will say but this one thing more: Manna behaves sweetly and kindly to my Rosalie, and so do Adams and our three doctors and young Fassbender. Every one rejoices in our happiness, and my young brothers-in-law are jolly fellows. We are all practising English, but we mean to remain true Germans.

In sight of land.

In three days we shall be in New York.

I don't know what I may have to encounter there. Rosalie, says too that I must write now: she is sitting beside me. But I really cannot write my inmost thoughts, when any one is in the same room with me, and especially when such dear eyes are looking at me. I will try, though: Rosalie thinks I have spoken so beautifully that it ought not to be lost. She makes me vain, she thinks so much of everything I say.

You know that we had a frightful storm, and that we were formally betrothed the day after. It was only a little betrothal feast; but in spirit we invited the best people to it, and I summoned and addressed you all; you first, dear Major — or, rather, pardon me, dear brother, and then you, dear sister. Your cap with the blue ribbon was a good centre for my thoughts.

I spoke as follows: —

Oh, you good people, I cannot. They all say, I spoke as if I had received the gift of tongues. It may be so, but write it I cannot. I must give my Rosalie a kiss. Major, give yours to the Majorin.

There, that's enough.

P. S. I have given Rosalie what I have written to read. She is taking notes of a severe criticism for me. Yes, that is the way with teachers that have passed their examination.

New York.

To put into a letter what one has experienced in New York in three days, nay, in one, would be like holding fast in our hands the changeful images in the clouds.

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I have given up writing in my diary; there is too much to say.

When we landed, the Uncle was waiting for us, but did not accept me as a nephew very willingly. I wish I had you here, dear Brother Major, to explain to him who I really am, and how circumstanced. Now I must wait till he finds it out for himself; perhaps that will never happen. I don't blame the Uncle, he had already picked out a husband for Rosalie. When I introduced Captain Dournay to him, he said: — "Dournay — Dournay?" but nothing more. He must have had to do with one of the family, some time or other.

The Uncle is very reserved; but great as his reticence is the openness of every one in Dr. Fritz's house. Ah, dear brother and sister, now I know what Herr Weidmann's home must have been when he was young, only Herr Weidmann has more sons, and here there are daughters. And what splendid creatures they are! And such a wife! I can only say, when she looks at you with her great eyes you are satisfied.

Oh, what glorious people we Germans are! Wherever we are transplanted, here in the air of freedom especially, we shoot up, and show, for the first time, what we really are.

I stood by when Roland and Lilian met; they must have some secret sign of recognition, for their first word was "Pebble." Yes, in love affairs some secret understanding is always formed. They merely held each other by the hand, and then went out together. Children live here in great independence.

Things go on beautifully at Dr. Fritz's, only nobody has any time.

I now understand the American saying, 'Time is money.' There is an extraordinary restlessness everywhere.

Here is war — war! Most people think it will soon be over, but Dr. Fritz says that the obstinacy of the Southern States is great, and that they are the better armed.

What is to become of me? you ask. Dr. Fritz thinks it strange that I still wish, in earnest, to become a teacher of negroes, especially as I do not yet speak the language with ease. He gives me hope, however, of being able to carry out my plan, by-and-by. And my thoughts go even further. A Normal School must be founded for negro youths; I shall keep this in view. Meantime I am giving music lessons here, and it seems so strange, when I come out of a house where we have been practising, to hear in the street the noisy roll of the drum.

Adams is in despair; the President will not yet permit any blacks to enlist. Adams has been told to work on the fortifications, but this he will not do.

Young Fassbender will have nothing to do with the bird-trade which Claus wanted to draw him into with his brother; he has undertaken to furnish supplies for the army. I hope he will behave honorably, for, sad to say, I hear that a great deal of cheating and embezzlement is carried on even in this Republic.

[Knopf to Fassbender.]

. . . . . and tell me, did I ever meet at your house a teacher by the name of Runzler? It is very important to me to know this, for he was my father-in-law.

I think he was at your house, and took snuff out of a large box.

Yes, it is so. I have just asked my Rosalie. Her father used to take snuff from a big beech-wood box. So my idea was correct. Memory is a whimsical thing. We ought, professionally, to take it into consideration far more than we do. I remember actually nothing but the beech-wood snuff-box; but I beg you to tell me what we talked about at that time. You recollect, or rather I remind you, that I was at that time much saddened by the childish prank which Roland had played off upon me. I was so troubled, that I cannot remember any thing that passed. So write me all about it, and you will be doing me a great favor. You will soon receive a card inscribed thus:

EMIL KNOPF,

ROSALIE KNOPF, *neé* RUNZLER,

Married.

I tell you the world is full of romances; the whole of life is but a romance.

The philosopher Schelling is right; poetry, art, government, religion, everything, had their origin in myths.

My good Roland has described to me his visit to Abraham Lincoln, and I have a good poem about it in my head. Unfortunately I have as yet only the title; but it is a beautiful one, for the piece is to be called: 'In Abraham's bosom.' Think how much can be included under such a heading!

Your son is an extremely practical man; you will have much satisfaction in him.

If your under-master chooses to come here, I can procure him much employment in piano lessons. We have teachers enough in Germany to export some.

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[Roland to the Professorin.]

Pardon me if I no longer venture to call you mother. It seems to me like an injustice to my dead mother that I ever did so. I entreat you to have her grave carefully attended to, and to keep it strewn with her favorite flowers, ericas and pinks.

Now that is off my mind, I will write of other things.

When I think of the green cottage, it always seems to me as if it were floating on the sea, and must come hither to us.

Eric and Manna have, of course, described our voyage to you. While at sea, I learned tolerably well how the ship was managed, and I should have liked best to enlist in the navy; but Eric would not hear of it.

It is probable that my father is fighting against us by sea, so it is better for me to be in the army.

I have seen Lilian again. I can say to you alone that we are engaged. Do not say that I am but seventeen, and she but fourteen years old. Events have made us older. Why, Franklin wanted to marry Miss Read, when he was only eighteen. We have vowed to belong to one another when the war is over.

Please let these lines be seen by no eyes but yours.

We have been at Washington; I have seen the Acropolis of the New World. I wished first to make a pilgrimage to Franklin's grave, but it was better for me that I could first see one of his greatest successors, Abraham Lincoln.

I have seen, for the first time, a man of immortal glory. Face to face with him, I have uttered the name which will be handed down to posterity. Those lips, whose words now resound throughout the world of to-day, and shall be reëchoed by future ages, have pronounced my name. I have looked on greatness, and how simple it is!

It was at Carlsbad, in the course of that memorable conversation, — I do not remember much of it, but this struck me, — that some one, the Cabinetsrath, I think, said: "He who has walked through a portrait gallery of his ancestors, traverses the whole of life accompanied, as it were, by those eyes." Oh, from Lincoln's eyes the spirit of Socrates and Aristides, the spirit of Moses, of Washington, of Franklin, gazed upon me. And then I felt those to be the forefathers whom every one can earn for himself by honorable labor, by loyalty and self-sacrifice. I have the loftiest ancestry, and I will be worthy of it.

I enclose a photograph of Lincoln. He resembles Weidmann, not in appearance, but in the impression he makes on one. I told him about Adams, and how unhappy the negro was that he could not enter the army, but could only be employed on fortifications. Lincoln told me to trust mature discretion, and not to forget, in the exuberance of youth, that we must use all means in our power to bring about an understanding, in order to be justified before our own conscience and before God, if obliged to go further, saying that this was a fraternal strife, a war, not of annihilation, but of reconciliation.

I should like to enter a negro regiment, and told him so. He was silent, and only laid his broad, powerful hand on my head. Manna remains at Dr. Fritz's. Eric has probably already told you of his entering the army with the rank of Major. I have a comrade, Hermann, Lilian's brother, who bears a strong resemblance to Rudolph Weidmann, and is of the same age, but much older in character. Here, one is much older at eighteen than with us. He talks very little; but what he says, is so sensible and decided! Ah, he has had a beautiful youth! — but I will say no more of that. I left Griffin behind, in Lilian's care. We are in the cavalry. If we only had our Villa Eden horses here! Tell the Major to write me word who has bought them. My heart aches if I think of Villa Eden.

Just now, having written that word, I was obliged to stop. Have patience with me: you shall see that your great goodness to me has not been thrown away. You shall hear of manly behaviour on the part of

Your

ROLAND DOURNAY.

I have taken the name of Dournay here. You will understand why.

[Manna to the Professorin.]

. . . I long to throw myself upon your breast, and there to say, "Mother!" and nothing more. The pen trembles in my hand, but I hear you say, "Be strong." I will. I dare not think how it will be when we are again with you. You are our home. We must wait, who knows how long? Who knows with what sacrifices? I dare not think that Eric may be taken from me — from us.

It seemed like a dream to me, when we trod the soil of this continent — of my native land. I would gladly have floated on with the ship forever. I am living in the house of Dr. Fritz. Eric and Roland have to-day gone to Washington to see Lincoln. I do not realize that Eric is not with me, and yet I must soon let him go, how differently! We will not be afraid, will we, mother?

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A wonderful destiny has brought us together and preserved us together; it will remain true to us.

I should like to tell you much of the home where I dwell, and of all the good, intellectually wide-awake people, and often, when I hear the wife and children talking and see them acting, I want to say, "That you get from Eric's mother, from my mother." There exists, over the whole earth, a common fund of noble thought, as every one finds who bears a portion of it within himself. This is, to me, the meaning of the words, "Seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you." You have given me the power of seeking, of knocking, and I find that it is opened unto me. Oh, mother! Why must it be by means of such tremendous events, poised so narrowly between life and death, that the greatness and goodness, the readiness for martyrdom of the human heart, must be developed? Why not in peace, in love, in quiet cares?

That will be the millennium, you have often said, when the best qualities will no longer unfold in struggle, but in beauty and peacefulness. You, my mother, are a messenger and a witness from the paradise-world beyond the strife. Rejoice, as we rejoice, that you are this messenger, this witness. I will become like you, I am and will be your daughter, and will grow ever more truly so.

It is well that I was interrupted in this. Lilian has a fresh voice, and our friend Knopf's betrothed sings beautifully. We have practised pieces in which I accompany Lilian's singing on the harp. Oh, if we could send some of those tones over the sea! In the midst of the uproar of life around us, here we sit and sing by the hour together. Now I understand anew that saying, that art is a redeemer; — that saying of father's.

Why is the word father so harrowing to my soul? How happy it was for my mother to be snatched away as she was! When I fall into this train of thought, I always feel as if entering a desert, far, far away; nowhere anything cheering to the eye or refreshing to the soul. We must bear it.

I see with sorrow that I am writing confusedly; but you know and believe me, when I say that I am really calm, and, above all, you are to know that I never burden our Eric with these heavy thoughts. It is less from intention than — no, as soon as he comes, all dread and grief vanish; everything is light, sunshine, day.

Three days later.

Eric has returned with Roland from Washington. They have much to tell, and Roland is in a state of enthusiasm which you can easily picture to yourself.

Have I already told you that our friend Knopf has found a charming little wife? She is full of intelligence, modesty, and energy. She, too, has had religious conflicts to undergo, as I have, not so severe; but then she has had a hard fight with herself. Lilian, too, young as she is, is far riper than her years, on account of her zeal for making converts.

She was sent to Germany, and our friend Knopf there accomplished a good work. Lillian has become a sister to me, and we talk much of how she shall go with us to the Rhine. She thinks, however, that Eric and I will remain here; but that will never be. Our home is there. You are our home. I kiss your eyes, cheeks, mouth, hands. Ah, let me kiss you once more, once more! You are my — ah! you do not know at all what you are; but you know that I am

Your daughter,

MANNA DOURNAY.

P.S. Dear Aunt Claudine, send me a great deal more good music, some soprano songs with harp accompaniment, and send them soon. At every tone I will think of you, and my naughty little finger, which you took so much trouble to train, is now perfectly obedient.

[Eric to Weidmann.]

When I stood before Abraham Lincoln, I thought of you, my revered friend. And because I have known, in my short life, what purely noble men breathe the same air with me, I was unembarrassed and at my ease. My lot is an exalted one: I can look in the faces of the best men of my age. And if wiseacres ever again tell me, condescendingly, that I am an idealist, I can reply to them, "I must be one, for I have met some of the noblest of men on my life-road; I not only believe in the elevation of pure humanity — I know it."

I will only give one incident of our interview.

We heard the opinion expressed, among those who surrounded Lincoln, that the negroes ought not to be set free, because they would do no work unless forced.

Roland said to me in a low voice: —

"Do the slaveholders work without being forced?"

Lincoln noticed that the boy was saying something to me, and encouraged him to speak without reserve. Roland repeated his question quietly but earnestly.

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You, who have helped me to awaken this young spirit, will sympathize in my pleasure.

And now I will tell you about your nephew.

Oh, our blessed German life! In old times travellers took with them into foreign countries the images of their saints. We Germans carry our poets, our philosophers and musicians over the face of the whole globe; and your nephew's pleasant, comfortable, free home is the abode of true culture. Here, in the midst of the tumult of political and private life, reign immortal spirits, who bring a devotion, a serenity, a holy quiet, of a peculiar sort.

Your nephew has done well in always telling me not to believe, with most people here, that this war will be over in a few months. I now think not of the end, but only of the next day.

And, in the midst of this growth and change of historic movement, I feel that the individual is like the single cell in a tree, or else that we are like boys on the school-bench. We do not know the entire educational plan. We do not know the end to which all this leads. We must learn our lessons; and cell is built upon cell, knowledge is added to knowledge, until — who knows the end?

In the first great struggle, in the New World's war of independence, there were Germans sold by German princes, to fight for the English against the Americans, and but few of our countrymen, towering up among them like Steuben and Kalb, did battle for the Republic. At that period the French — Lafayette's name rings out clear among them — stood foremost among the New World's champions of freedom. To-day the Union army contains thousands of Germans, witnesses who have emigrated or been exiled. Why are there no Frenchmen? I know the reason, and so do you.

I see the poet of the future draw near. The great drama of our epoch, the strife between Cæsarism and self-government, is presented to his gaze in dimensions such as no past age could know; he will compress the struggle within narrow limits.

The Republic of the United States has not yet existed a century. Oh, how different is the aspect of things here from what we had pictured to ourselves! I have found many who doubt the continuance of the Union; cultivated clergymen even told me that there was certainly more power of endurance in the monarchical form of government. That is the feeling of dejection and despair: but it is, I believe, only to be met with in single instances.

How often I am obliged to hear myself called a philosophical idealist! And they tell me I shall soon be converted. Your nephew, whose comprehensive glance sees all sides of a subject, has solved this enigma for me. The people here have lived so long for their own ease alone, feeling their claims of the State only occasionally, as voters. They must now pass through the school of military discipline, of staking their lives for the life of the nation — only as an education, of course, to be free again afterwards.

The so-called slavery question is not so nearly decided, by a great deal, as we supposed.

Your nephew thinks the complete abolition of slavery will become a necessary war measure of vital importance to the continued existence of the nation; that patriotism must be wedded to humanity — that the pure ideal must give place to utilitarianism and necessity — that the logic of events will bring about a decision not to be effected by the logic of thought. There is still a strong party here in the North who do not wish to proceed to the one extreme measure, as they call the absolute abolition of slavery; but hope to subdue the South by war instead.

We hope they will not succeed. The words "necessity of State," so often misused by tyrants, will now, we trust lead to Liberty.

How much one is obliged to hear against the negroes in this country!

That the four million slaves represent twenty hundred million dollars, is, of course, the point first mentioned; then that the blacks have many vices, as though a perfect model of virtue were to be expected from a down-trodden race. Any nation, so long held in bondage, tortured, martyred, condemned to ignorance, would have been just what they are. Moreover, tyranny has, in all ages, proclaimed the oppressed to be low beings, ignoring, of course, the fact that if they have some base tendencies, it is the oppression that has prepared the soil and implanted them.

I have made the acquaintance here of a distinguished negro, whose oration on the present situation and the future of his race I had heard. There was a touch of Demosthenes in it. He was a slave twenty-two years, and has acquired a complete scientific education.

Sometimes there is in his voice a quivering tone of lament, as of one drooping

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under a weight of sorrow, and I admire him for suppressing an avengeful anger. If a single man can do much for his race, this man, or one like him, might become an historic character.

But the heroic age is past, entirely and forever; now we must depend on community of action.

We are transported into the midst of an historical or logical unfolding of events. The attempts at peaceful reconciliation have been of no avail. In spite of the cry "No coërcion!" an army had to be raised, and now the cry is, "No confiscation of property!" That means, no abolition of slavery, and yet this must be the second result, since it could not be the first.

The moral debt, neither noted down nor paid interest on, nor cancelled on change, is now becoming a great national debt of the Union, which the country will be obliged to liquidate with money and blood.

[Manna to the Mother.]

. . . . . What a small matter was that night-riot made by men with blackened faces! I have lived through a pro-slavery riot. Doctor Fritz says it arose from the bitter opposition to the conscription. Many blacks were murdered, our friend Knopf's school was laid in ruins, and the negro orphan asylum burned to the ground, the poor black children rolling crying on the pavement. We have much to do. The world has much to make amends for.

[Eric to the Banker.]

. . . . . I perfectly understand your sorrow over the fact that there are some Jews among the Secessionists. General Twiggs, commanding in Texas, who went over to the rebels with his army, fortress, and munitions of war, was a Jew.

And that speculators on change also lend assistance to the defenders of slavery! Why should they less than the professedly pious English?

Why do you require all the Jews, collectively and individually, to stand on the side of moral principle? They have the right of equality, even in ill-doing. They are, if one may be permitted to say so, equally justified in crime with other men. It must be shown, it is now being shown, that no religion has the monopoly of morality.

You complain that the passion for enjoyment has invaded even your innermost circle of friends.

That belongs under the heading above indicated. The more I think over your letter, the more surely I arrive at this conclusion: the Jews, so long and so cruelly excluded from participation in national affairs, and condemned to a sad cosmopolitism, will now, in their days of liberation, behave like natives of the different communities in which it is their lot to be, and will, above all, remain patriotic.

Moreover, I can assure you that many Jews are here among us, fighting with valor and self-sacrifice.

The young physician equipped by you is exceedingly able.

The money which you sent over is being conscientiously expended.

I hope yet to sing with your daughter-in-law, to whom please present my kind regards.

My wife joins me in cordial remembrances of you.

[The Professorin to Eric and Manna.]

All is well. Would that I could send you some of the spring fragrance and beauty which surround us here. No tree bears blossoms as countless as the blessings which go out from my heart to you. Here we sit in peace, and you are out there in the battle. We can do nothing for you, only I say to you, my son, and to you, my daughter: whatever may come, abide quietly in the assurance, that having followed the leadings of the spirit, we must silently recognize and bear our part. I have been in the next village; it must be like a recent settlement in America.

It is a beautiful and great thing to be able to help so many human beings to a cheerful and active existence.

My son, why do you not write whether you have inquired for Uncle Alphonso? Do not delay doing so. If he is yet living, tell him that I have never judged him unkindly, though he has been so hard upon us; and tell him that your father always preserved a brotherly feeling for him. But ah, I do not know whether he is still alive. Do not delay to get some positive information.

Our friend Einsiedel is busy in arranging your father's papers.

Our good Major wants to have a room built in the hot-house, and, next winter, live there all day long among the plants, breathing in their fragrance; then, he asserts, he should live to be a hundred years old.

[Claudine to Manna.]

If you feel overwhelmed by the hard experiences which you must bear, do not forget to keep up your study of astronomy; it takes us out of all our small troubles.

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You will have to make new applications of your astronomical knowledge to new conditions in America.

[Lina to Manna.]

To-morrow I give my first large coffee-party; look upon me with respect. I spread fine damask table-cloths, and have my own gilt-edged cups. Ah, why can you not be here? People say that my voice is much stronger now that I am a mother. O Manna, the most beautiful song is that which one sings to her child. I hope it won't be long before you know it.

Pranken and his wife have come back, but they are not to remain with us. He is to be ambassador somewhere on the Lower Danube, near Turkey; I don't know the name of the country.

I have thought of a beautiful plan for you. When you come home, you must establish a special singing-club of all the matrons and maidens in the neighborhood, and we'll sing in your garden, and in the beautiful music-room, and in the pretty boats on the river, and on the flat-roofs, and everywhere. Ah, that will be life! If to-morrow were only here!

[Einsiedel to Eric.]

Elevating thoughts are in these papers which your father left behind him. It is much to be regretted that one of them has not been given to the world before this. He foresaw this war in America quite clearly. Connected and logical thought is a kind of prophecy. I shall publish the sheets with my positive assurance that they were written by a noble recluse many years before the events foretold.

[Weidmann to Eric.]

We are in the midst of all sorts of work. You wanderers took much of our peace away with you, but now all is in its habitual order again.

Thank you, dear Dournay, for your letter. My nephew always sends me the newspapers regularly. Do not allow yourself to be distracted by thoughts of Europe, and by too great a variety of interests; you are stationed at a post where you must keep only the next duty before your eyes. Forgive me for permitting myself to admonish you thus. It was high time that this disgrace should be wiped out from the consciousness of our age, for it had begun to appear that long habit was weakening the keen and bitter sense of its sin and shame.

I am finding surprising confirmation of this opinion. Herr Sonnenkamp corrupted our district more than he knew; people now speak well of him. "Ah, only a slave-trader!" "Nothing worse!" may be heard on all sides.

There is always something commanding in heroism; the bold scoundrel is more attractive than the unobtrusively virtuous man. Not only the frivolous, but quite sober-minded men think that the Prince was unnecessarily scrupulous in refusing to ennoble Herr Sonnenkamp.

A plant has become common in Europe which is called the water-pest: you may have read of it; it came from Canada, probably attached to some vessel, and has almost choked the Thames with its roots and entangled stems; it has crept far into the continent, and has now reached us, but we will conquer it. Such a water-pest spreads too in spiritual matters.

[Doctor Richard to Eric.]

All the others have no doubt written most edifying and sentimental letters; I have something better for you. First, let me tell you to rejoice that you have something to do, and have done with speculating.

And now for a fine story: —

Otto von Pranken—for whom I always had a sympathy, like all the rest of the profane world; he is no paragon of virtue, but there's a good deal in him—has beaten the black-coats in shrewdness; he got himself recommended to Rome by them and there he has played a smart trick. He entered the Papal army with the rank of Major, but got into some difficulty, on purpose, as I believe. He wrote a letter full of dissatisfaction over the organization of the army, and this gave him an excuse for resigning, and marrying the young widow, the daughter of Herr von Endlich. When you come home you will have some new neighbors. They say, though, that Pranken is to enter on a diplomatic career, and I think he has talent for it.

Have you seen or heard nothing of Frau Bella?

[The Majorin Grassler late Fraulein Milch, to Knopf.]

You can fancy how your letter rejoiced us. My good husband was cheered up by it into better spirits than he has had for a long time. I am sorry to say that since you all went off, he has been full of trouble. For months he has not been able to get rid of the thought why he was not younger, so that he could have gone with you. And then, don't laugh at us, we have a real family trial, for our Laadi has grown blind, and no physican can help her. People laughed at us for tending the dog so carefully: they want us to have her shot, but

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that we can't do, and so we take care of poor Laadi. My husband sits for hours by her, talking to her, and even takes her out for a little walk every day. Why must the dog grow blind? Ah, but I'm asking stupid questions; one has to be careful not to grow sentimental; Mother Nature is a hard mother.

I knew the father of your Rosalie; he was once at our house with the school-master Fassbender.

[Eric to Weidmann.

Adams was ordered to work in the trenches, and a great number of negroes with him, but he would not take the pick in his hand; then Roland did what I once dissuaded him from doing, when he wanted to labor among the workmen at the castle. I think I told you about it. Now he joined the negroes and used his pick with them, and when I went to him once, as he wiped the perspiration from his forehead, I saw a light in the youth's eye, which said that the crown of human honor rests on the brow from which runs the sweat of toil.

Beginning this letter to you composes me, in the midst of the constant excitement of camp-life.

There is much discontent in the army; men are blaming Lincoln for maintaining a vacillating, uncertain policy, or, to say the least, for his extreme slowness.

I must leave it to Dr. Fritz, or rather to time, to prove the truth of his words when he says, Lincoln is not a genius, an individual towering above the mass; he is an average man, the exact exponent of the spirit of the people at its present stage of progress. He is not remarkably distinguished, but a man of just the right stamp.

Perhaps that is true, and it is much to say. This is not greatness in the old sense of the word, and we may have entered upon an age which has outgrown the heroic, and those representatives of heroism around whom all others seemed grouped as minor figures.

Opposed to the Monarchic, the Aristocratic, and the Monotheistic, stand the Republican, the Democratic, and the Pantheistic: they are only three different names for three unfoldings of the same principle.

[Roland to the Professorin.]

My first lines from camp shall be to you, dear Frau Professorin. I thank you for the motto which you once gave me; I feel as if I were not the same person to whom all that happened. I promise you, and this is a new oath of allegiance, to be true to your motto.

Ah, why do you not know Lilian? she deserves that you should know her.

I have told her a great deal about you; she thinks she should stand in awe of any one so wise and learned, but I tell her she need not.

And oh, Dr. Fritz is such a noble man. He told me that he was a pupil of your husband, and it must make you happy that your husband's spirit lives on in such a man, here in the New World.

I must try not to think too much of you and of the past: I ought now to give my thoughts only to what we have before us; and I am tired out. I have had a very fatiguing drill.

Eric is held in great respect here. All is still; in camp it is said that to-morrow we shall come under fire for the first time.

Morning.

The battle is beginning; I hope to do my duty.

Evening.

I have been promoted on the field.

[Eric to Weidmann.]

In Camp.

We have fought a battle; we have been defeated. Roland has distinguished himself, and been promoted. I have to use all my influence to restrain his daring.

The coolness and deliberation of your grand-nephew Hermann are a great help to me.

The hardest thing in this war is, that thousands must necessarily be sacrificed in order to teach the officers the art of war. There is a deficiency of experienced and tried leaders; and it is no small thing that the army, wholly without any confidence in the military skill of its generals, maintains itself so bravely. They must learn how to fight by fighting; and in this particular the Southern States have the advantage.

I have very great doubts whether our opponents fight with the hope of triumph; I mean, whether they honestly believe, that if they conquer, their principle can be permanently established.

Their very bitterness, which exceeds all bounds of a common humanity, the very vindictiveness with which they carry on the contest, shows me that they believe in a victory by war, but not by peace. And here the question presents itself to me: Why must an acknowledged ideal principle always and forever be attained through blood?

This is the great enigma of history. But it is the same as it is in a smaller sphere and in individual life; humanity is rational, but its predominating characteristic is passion, impulsive affection, which urges for-

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ward and renovates the life of humanity as it does that of the individual. I am reminded of an expression of yours, that nothing is so conducive to the growth of vegetation as a thunder-storm. It is perhaps the same in the history of man and of humanity. Schiller's dream, that the highest form of poetry would be the peaceful idyl of an equilibrium of opposite forces without any great sacrifice, is but a dream. It is not found in the sphere of pure thought or poesy, because it is nowhere found in actual life.

As Goethe said, this America has no middle ages to conquer, but he was mistaken in saying that it had no basaltic strata, for it is now just coming out of its own peculiar condition of feudalism. Its history, like that of a dramatic poem, is condensed into a briefer period of time, and brought more directly under our view.

This America has been engaged in no war for dynasty or religion, and it must now fight for an idea. Independence was the first great question, and that may be also an egoistic question. The emancipation of others is the second and purely ideal one; and to be taken entirely out of the strife for wealth and material goods where external well-being is the sole interest, the final and supreme concern, and to be placed in a period of history where life must be imperilled for an idea, this gives ideal power. America now for the first time brings her new element, her sacrificial gift, into the Pantheon of humanity. Until now, it might be said that the historical greatness of America bore no comparison with its natural greatness.

America has had, compressed into a single epoch of existence, its migration of the nations, its crusades, and its thirty years' war; and there is something of the rapidity and the instantaneousness of the electric telegraph in its history.

Here I am, sitting in camp, and writing like a schoolmaster. But it has done me good. I feel collected, refreshed, and strengthened while turning my thoughts to you.

[Roland to the Professorin.]

We have been beaten! Mother, we have been beaten! Eric consoles me and consoles us all; he says that it is good for us, we must learn to stand the brunt. Well, I will learn.

(Eric's Postscript.) Mother! I found these lines which Roland left behind, and I send them to you. Roland is missing, and has either fallen or been taken prisoner; he has borne himself bravely, and had been promoted to be an officer. O my Roland!

[Eric to Weidmann.]

In Camp.

The great, the necessary step has been taken; the negroes have been called to serve in the army, and we have enlisted in a negro regiment, — Roland, Hermann, and I. Now the contest is for the first time complete. The negroes show themselves willing and docile, and are always merry. This discipline of the army is an excellent preparatory school for life.

We have learned from one of our spies that a man who calls himself Banfield, but who from the description I think is Sonnenkamp, is in the army in front of us, and with him there is a woman in man's dress, a great beauty, who receives the homage of all. I had hoped that he would enter the Navy; it is horrible to me that he and his son are now fighting in hostile ranks, so directly face to face with each other. I trust that Roland will hear nothing of it.

But it is very pleasant to see the beautiful comradeship of Roland and your grand-nephew, Hermann; they are inseparable.

[Roland to the Professorin.]

The final step has been taken. Eric, Hermann, and I have enlisted in a black regiment. This is just what I wanted. I may be allowed to say it to you, these bondmen now struggling for a manhood which would not have been accorded to them in peace, they love me. I think of Parker's word. Oh, what a day that was when I heard his name from you for the first time, there going out of church, and then ——

Forward! this is now our watchword; there must be no looking back now. One thing more. I have found a friend, and a better one you could not have wished for me out of your own full loving heart; and my Hermann is Lilian's brother. I dare not dwell upon the thought that he is fighting from his own voluntary choice, and I — No, I, too, stake all freely.

[Eric to Weidmann.]

In Camp.

O my friend! Roland is missing. We have gained a victory. I have searched the battle-field with our surgeon, Adams, and Hermann. O what a sight! We did not find Roland. Our hope is that he has been taken prisoner.

What a hope!

I am obliged to console myself while

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consoling Hermann. The youth feels to the very depth of his true soul sorrow for the lost one, but he is far from exhibiting any weakness; the good training of a free Commonwealth, and of the German parental home, has now its effect. Hermann is now my tent companion; he is entirely different from Roland. Here in America every one has room for development, and all the branches live and spread forth on the tree; and besides, Hermann has no sorrowful conflict with fate in his soul, such as my poor Roland had.

I beg you, if any news comes from Sonnenkamp addressed to me, that you would write to him that his son is a prisoner.

I am tired to death. The images of the wounded, the dead, the trampled under foot, will never fade from my memory.

I don't know when I shall write you again, but I entreat you to let Sonnenkamp know about Roland immediately; perhaps you could insert it in some English newspaper which circulates in the Southern States.

Confer with Professor Einsiedel about everything, but I beg you not to say anything about it to my mother.

[Lilian to the Professorin.]

"Write at once to Eric's mother," says Roland to me.

So you see, honored lady, that I have found him.

The terrible tidings reached us that Roland had either been killed or taken prisoner, and I could no longer endure it. I went down into the enemy's country. Oh, how much I have gone through! I have been on the battle-field, and looked into the faces of hundreds of the mangled and the dead. I have been in hospitals, and heard the moans and the groans of the sick and the wounded, but nowhere Roland, nowhere any trace of him.

I still travelled onward, and they had compassion for me, those terrible people; they pitied the lonely maiden who was seeking her beloved.

I found him at last—no, not I. Griffin found him, for the faithful animal was with me. We found him in a barn. He is wounded. Oh, he looked so emaciated, so changed, that I scarcely knew him! But now all is well.

Roland relates that a woman in man's clothing had him taken into the barn, and he asserts that it was the Countess Bella. I saw her once when I was at Mattenheim, I have seen her now. I think it was she—rushing past on horseback, and dressed like a man. She looked at me, and must have recognized me.

Oh, mother! it is very wonderful. Perhaps Roland has told you that he gave me a pebble, and I gave one to him, when we saw each other at Mattenheim. This pebble he kept and wore over his heart, and the pebble saved his life.

I have sent an account of everything to New York, but I do not know whether the letter will get there. Letters will reach Europe, and I beg you to forward the tidings to my father and to Eric. Say, besides, that Roland is wholly out of danger; a German physician in the army here gives me this assurance.

Send the news also to Mattenheim, to uncle and aunt and all the relatives.

Roland has just waked, having had a good sleep.

He wants me to request you to take the deaf mute to the Villa, and give him something to do in the garden; he talks a great deal about him.

[Eric to Weidmann.]

Now the worst is over! I don't know how to put it into words.

It was a hot day, and the battle was a severely contested one on both sides. We have gained the victory, and our loss is great. Adams came to me; he was bleeding, and foaming at the mouth. I wanted to bind up his wounds, but he pushed me away, crying, —

"Come! come! I did not kill him, he gave the masonic sign—I dared not kill him—he's lying outside there."

"Who?"

"The man—the man."

I had great difficulty in getting him to speak the name. It was Sonnenkamp.

I took a physician with me, and we hurried past the wounded calling for help.

We came to a hill; there he lay. I could hardly get my breath as I stood there before him, but at last I cried, —

"Father!"

"Father!" screamed he. "Away! leave me!"

He stared at me with glassy eyes. He tore up the grass, and digging out the earth, he buried his face in the fresh mould, trying to inhale that peculiar odor which had always refreshed him; but he shook his head, appearing unable to perceive the earthy smell.

He now turned round and stared at me.

The physican made preparations to dress his wounds, from several of which the blood was flowing. He thrust the physician away with violence.

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"I will not be bound! Off with the whole of you!"

I kneeled down, and said that he had not been fighting against his son; that Roland had been missing for three months, and had evidently been taken prisoner.

"A prisoner! woe! woe! woe!" he shrieked. "A prisoner! Oh, she is to blame — she! she! I did not want to! I had to — she wanted to ride on horseback — she sits splendidly — to play the amazon."

He burst into a scornful laugh. "On the sea — on the ocean —" continued he, "there I wanted to be — I had to follow — I saw her fall — she was beautiful even in death — an enchantress — an enchantress!"

The physician beckoned to me; I knew what he meant. I asked him if he desired anything.

He stared at me.

"Yonder — give me that — give!" He pointed to a beautiful heath-plant not far off. Adams had observed our look and the words. He tore up a whole bunch of ericas, and gave them into the hand of the dying man, who gazed at him with eyes almost starting out of his head. Then a smile came over his face; drawing himself up with a mighty energy, he fell back uttering one terrible shriek, and his limbs were straightened in death. He died with the heath-plants in his clenched hand.

Oh, how much I have gone through, how much I have been forced to suffer! Nothing harder can ever befall me.

As we buried him in the earth, and covered him over with heaths, I wept over a man whose vast powers had led him astray. What would have been his fate, if ——

Here I was interrupted in the midst of my writing. Since those lines were penned, I have buried another corpse.

I was called to Adams, who had neglected having his wounds attended to, and now it was too late. He asked after me. I stood at his bed-side, and with a last exertion of strength, he asked me: —

"Herr Major, can any one steal a thing like that?"

"What do you mean?"

"Can a man like that belong to our order, and have the sign?"

"You see that he can."

"What do the brethren have swords for then? Why did I not —" cried he, gnashing his teeth.

He clenched his fists, raised himself up, and then sank back. His savage nature, which had been only repressed and held in constraint, broke out in the last death-struggle.

Oh, I can write nothing more. I have been deceived in myself. I believed myself fortified against everything, but I am not. I beg you, dear Herr Weidmann, to inform my mother of the death of Manna's and Roland's father.

If I could only go to sleep, if I could only rest!

[Postscript in Manna's hand-writing.]

This letter, written thus far, was found in my Eric's pocket when he was drawn from under his horse's hoofs. In his excited, and, in fact, delirious state, he had mounted his horse, thinking he was going into battle. He was thrown. I send the letter. He does not yet recognize any one, and is still delirious, but the physician gives me some hope.

I shall keep the letter until I can give some more favorable tidings.

Three days later.

My husband says that he finds invigoration in thinking of you. I have also to-day written to the Mother.

[Manna to the Professorin.]

Mother, he is saved! All anxiety has fled. He is saved! He was down with a fever days and nights, and did not recognize me; he knew my dogs, Rose and Thistle, but not me. But once he exclaimed: —

"Oh, the harp-tones!"

I telegraphed at once to New York for my harp to be sent to me; the telegraphist told me of a woman in the place who had a harp; she lived alone, and her lot had been a hard one, as she had learned after her marriage that her husband had another wife living. I went to see the woman, and this woman is the mother of my Heimchen. The Superior had written to her of the love of her child for me, and I had to relate many things to the mother. And now — yes, we are always living in the midst of wonders! Heimchen gave to me the harp from which the tones are to come that will give my husband rest.

I stationed myself in the next room, and with the physician's consent, I played upon the harp. Eric went to sleep, and when he waked, said: —

"Why does not Manna come?"

The physician forbade my entering the room, as it was important he should receive no violent shock. And so I could see him only when his eyes were closed, until at last the surgeon gave his permission.

In the wanderings of fever he always saw me as I was in the convent when I had on the wings, and he spoke French and laughed at sister Seraphine. The shock of

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my father's death had affected Eric so deeply, that, as the physician told me, he had been for a long time without an hour's sleep.

Sedatives were given to Eric, but they seemed to be attended with some risk, and had to be discontinued. Then there was another battle. All besought him to keep quiet, as he had already distinguished himself so highly; but he mounted his horse and rode off. The horse stumbled and threw him headlong, and he was taken up for dead and carried into the hospital. I received the news and hastened hither. Everything is going on well now, but he is still very weak.

But he begged me, and it is just like him, to confer the pleasure upon the rest of the wounded, so I have to play the harp for hours together. It is an unspeakable refreshment to the patients, and the surgeons assert that the wounds heal more rapidly, on account of the cheerful state of mind thereby induced. And when I come back to Eric, and the surgeon tells him how beneficial the music is to the sick, his countenance lights up. He speaks but little; he holds my hand silently, and only says that he has, during his life, talked too much. But, mother, you may feel easy.

Eric wants to be allowed to write a word to you.

(In a trembling hand was written as follows:)

Thy living, loving, beloved son Eric.

(Then in Manna's hand-writing:)

Don't be alarmed at these unsteady strokes. The physician says that all danger is over, and nothing is needed but absolute rest.

Oh, mother! How can I adequately thank the Eternal Spirit that my Eric lives; that I am not a widow, and that a life is not made fatherless from its very birth? Be easy; I remain strong, and I have a threefold duty in living.

[Manna to Professor Einsiedel.]

I was called in the hospital to a prisoner from the Southern army, severely wounded, who had heard my harp-playing. He asked about me, and was told that I was a German. The man related to me that he had an uncle in Germany, who had been a book-keeper in a large banking establishment. One evening when his uncle was at the theatre, he robbed him and fled. I told him that I had become acquainted with such a man through you at Carlsbad, that is to say, I had seen him; I gave as good a description of him as I could. The wounded man asserted that it was his uncle, and begged me to write to him that he repented of what he had done. He had always hoped that he should become wealthy some day, so as to return and make full restitution; this could not be realized now, as he must die poor; but he desired that his uncle should know of his repentance.

You will impart all this to the man.

[Eric to his mother.]

In the midst of the wanderings of my fever, I kept saying to myself: Thou hast promised thy mother to return home safe and sound. Thou must not be ill, must not die. Thou must keep thy word. And this thought was ever by me, sometimes making me quiet, sometimes restless. I was forever thinking that I could certainly do something to force nature to remove the shadows, the heaviness, the dullness which weighed me down. There were two souls in me. And once I very plainly heard you saying to me: Keep perfectly quiet; you are undermining your life with your perpetual thinking; for once let thinking alone. And then I was standing on the stage at the music festival to sing, but I could not bring out a solitary note. I have gone through a great deal of suffering, but I am now in perfectly good spirits.

[Doctor Fritz to Weidmann.]

A strange riddle has been solved by means of Eric's being wounded, an account of which was given in the newspapers in connection with the victory. A small, delicate-looking old man came to me, who addressed me in German, but with difficulty, showing that he had probably not made use of the language for many years. He asked me if I was acquainted with a Major Dournay. I said yes, and after a great deal of trouble, I succeeded in finding out that this was Eric's uncle, a man of very great wealth. He wanted to know all about the family, and especially whether his sister Claudine was yet living. Luckily, Knopf could tell him all the particulars.

[Eric to his mother.]

Mother! My uncle has been found! Through my fall from the horse, but yet more through Manna's playing on the harp, that was spoken of in the newspapers as some marvellous tale, my uncle came to see Dr. Fritz. My uncle visited me while I was very ill, and I thought that I had seen my father. They tell me that I became so excited that my life was again endangered, and they had to withhold the news until I had wholly recovered. I showed your letter to my uncle, and the old man, who

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has heard nothing from Europe for ten years, wept bitterly. He will go back to Europe with us.

[Knopf to Fassbender.]

The classic age had great, noble, heroic forms, but it had no uncle in America. And how did the world before Columbus' day get on without any uncles in America? I think that our good Lord, as he rested on the seventh day, dreamed, in his mid-day sleep, of the uncle in America, meditated, and created him.

My friend, Major Dournay, has now found his uncle with a fortune; I don't know how much it is, but a large one, and all honorably earned. Now he is himself put in a position to solve the riddle of what should be done with so much money. He will not build my music hall, but he will do something else that's great.

[Doctor Fritz to Weidmann.]

Two children are born to us. Manna has a son, and Frau Knopf a daughter. I was with Knopf when his daughter was born, and when he saw her face the first time, he exclaimed aloud: —

"Pure Caucasian race!"

Then he acknowledged to me, that in spite of his liking for the negroes, he had always feared that his Rosalie's child would be black, because she had black children so constantly around her, since she had been their teacher with him. And now he is delighted that his daughter, who is to be named Manna Erica, is a pure Caucasian, and he merrily extols the fate which has decreed that the first-born of the girls' teacher shall be a girl.

Manna's child has received the name of Benjamin Alphonso. Uncle Alphonso is god-father; he has, in his will, divided his property equally between his sister Claudine and his brother's son, and already transferred one-half of it. He means to go to Europe with his nephew, but I do not think the good little man will live long. I have already told you that my daughter Lilian sought out our young Roland in the enemy's country, and rescued him. Roland is still very weak, but his youthful vigor will restore him.

The great war is drawing to a close, and with the rejoicings over victory we shall celebrate Roland's and Lilian's wedding. They are to remain here with us.

Roland has borne himself bravely. We are to use the greater part of his property to buy land for the negroes, furnish them with all necessary supplies, and establish schools for them.

[Eric to his mother.]

Mother! Grandmother! all is well. Ah, what more is there to say? After all our suffering we are happy. And, mother, I am coming, coming home with my wife and child, and Uncle Alphonso. The waves will bear us up, the ship will carry us, the land will stand firm, and, mother, I shall hold you in my arms again, and lay my child in your arms; we shall live and work.

[Eric to Weidmann.]

We have entered Richmond with our black regiment.

The noblest experience has been mine: I have been allowed to take part in the greatest struggle of our country.

Slavery is no more.

Now let the gentlemen in gowns and bands come, and show us heretics a deed which shall bear such mighty consequences as this.

Later.

Read this! A murder, an assassination! Why was it not to be? Why can nothing be carried out purely to perfection? Lincoln assassinated!

Does it not often seem as if a malicious demon ruled the world?

This deed is a standing proof of how far the supporters of an aristocracy, the defenders of a privileged class, the deniers of human rights, have sunk into barbarism. In future days such wickedness will not be believed; but now it stands plainly before us as assassination, and not the deed of a single individual; it is the work of a sworn band of conspirators.

The fanaticism of the Southern States had burst forth in war, now it has its seal of blood.

[Knopf to Weidmann.]

Our friend Dournay's uncle is dead; he was ill, and the news of the assassination of President Lincoln killed him.

Eric, Manna, and their child are going home.

[Eric to Professor Einsiedel.]

What I am now interested in arranging is not the filling out of my own life, the new calling into which I have entered. It is the torment attendant on the self-renovation of the modern mind, that doubts and questions immediately set themselves in opposition to action.

I want to establish a refuge for laborers in the intellectual field, but the question comes up to me: —

Is not this a direct contradiction to the spirit of this modern age?

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Is not the desire for solitude a necessary part of that free individual life which is our noblest characteristic?

Could I imagine a Lessing, in his old age, in this house of refuge which I would found?

Is not the quiet communion with one's self, which is our most precious treasure, destroyed or banished by living in such close relations with others?

I think that it is not, and only those who pine for rest shall enter the home.

I beg you not to consider this as the roof of my life-building; it is to be only a merry green bough which I would set up.

[Eric to Weidmann.]

This letter goes only three days before us to Europe, to the Rhine.

I am coming home.

Deliver the enclosed legal document to the proper authorities.

I herein declare that only a life interest is retained in Villa Eden for myself and Manna, my wife. I herein declare the house, the garden, the park, as described in the Registry office, and a sufficient sum, hereafter to be determined, irrevocably assigned for the maintenance of deserving scientific men and artists.

My friend and teacher, Professor Einsiedel, is commissioned to draw up the rules regulating the admission and the mode of life of those who are to be inmates of Villa Eden.

My wish is, that there should be a peaceful refuge for deserving intellectual labor, a home for voluntary work, in VILLA EDEN, THE COUNTRY HOUSE ON THE RHINE.

(P.S.) I have promised Roland, if I live until the year 1887, to come back here to celebrate the hundredth birthday of the American Republic. Then will we see and compare what each of us has accomplished in his father-land and for his fellow-men.

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